

After a Swim

CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY IDRIES SHAH

The Onion

The Tale of the Sands

The Ants and the Pen

Speak First and Lose

The Horrible Dib Dib

The Man, the Tree and the Wolf

The Fisherman's Neighbour

The Magic Potion of Oinkink

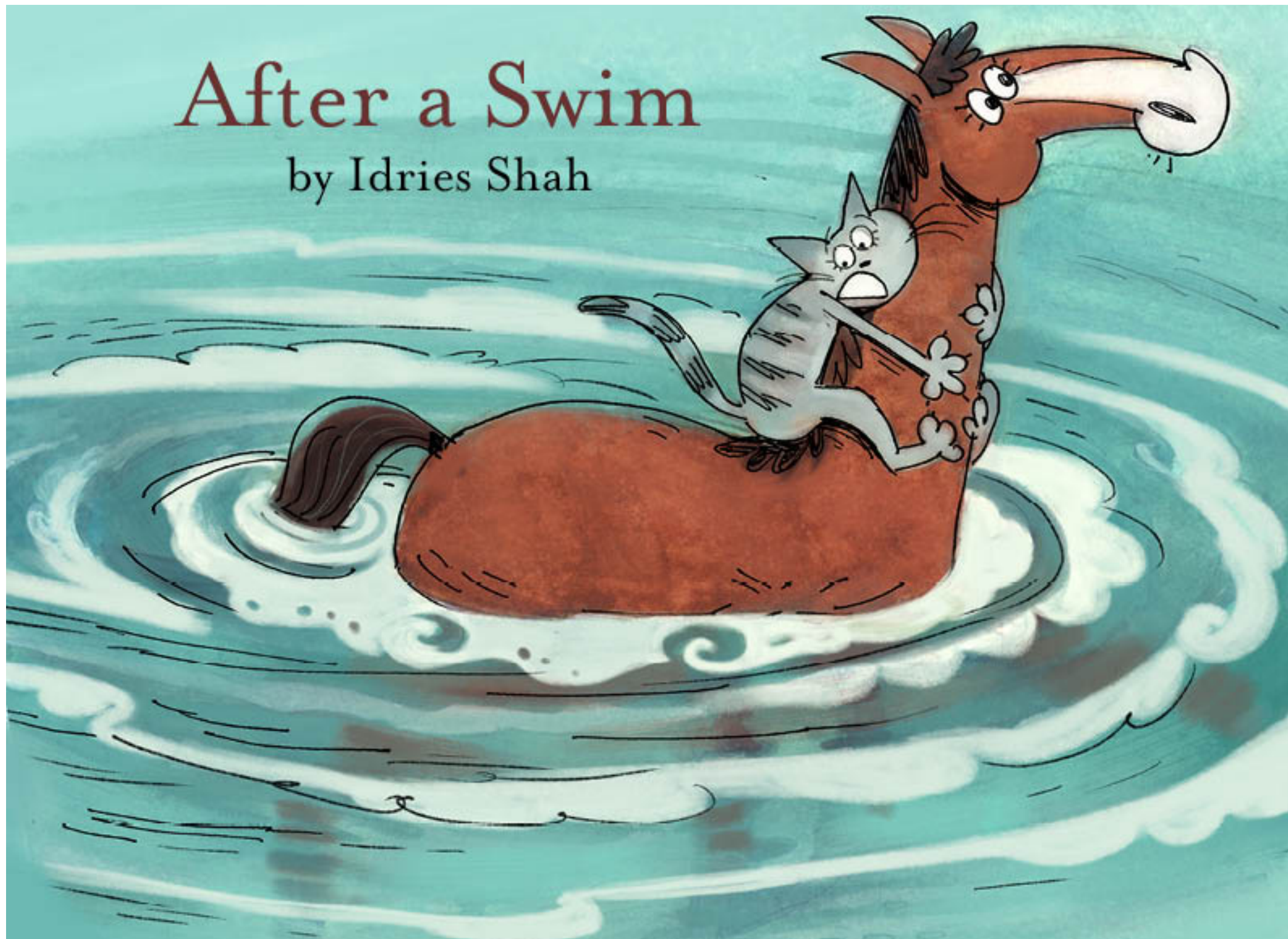
The Rich Man and the Monkey

The Boy With No Voice and the Men Who Couldn't Hear

The Tale of Melon City

After a Swim

by Idries Shah



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Layout and Design: Rachana Shah

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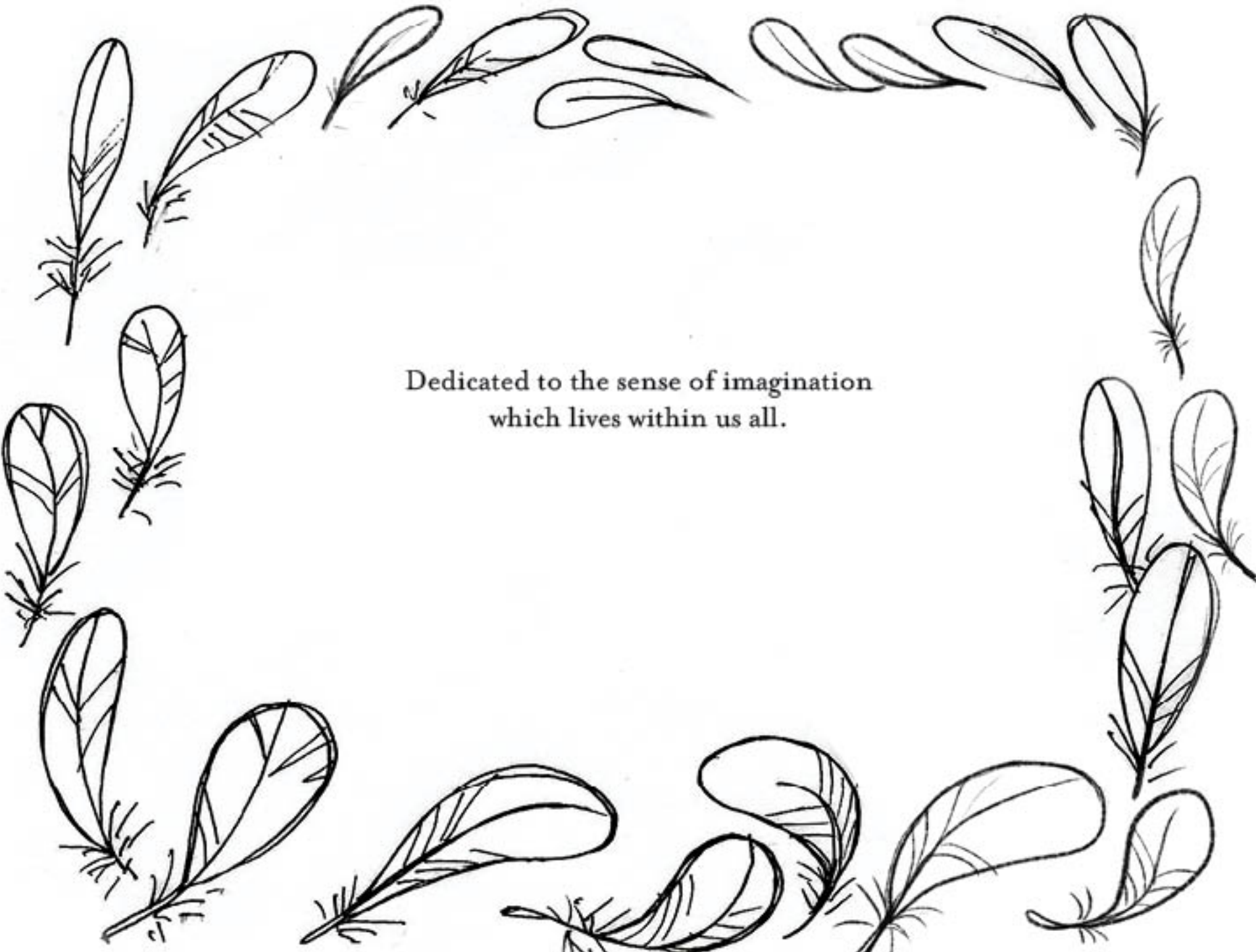
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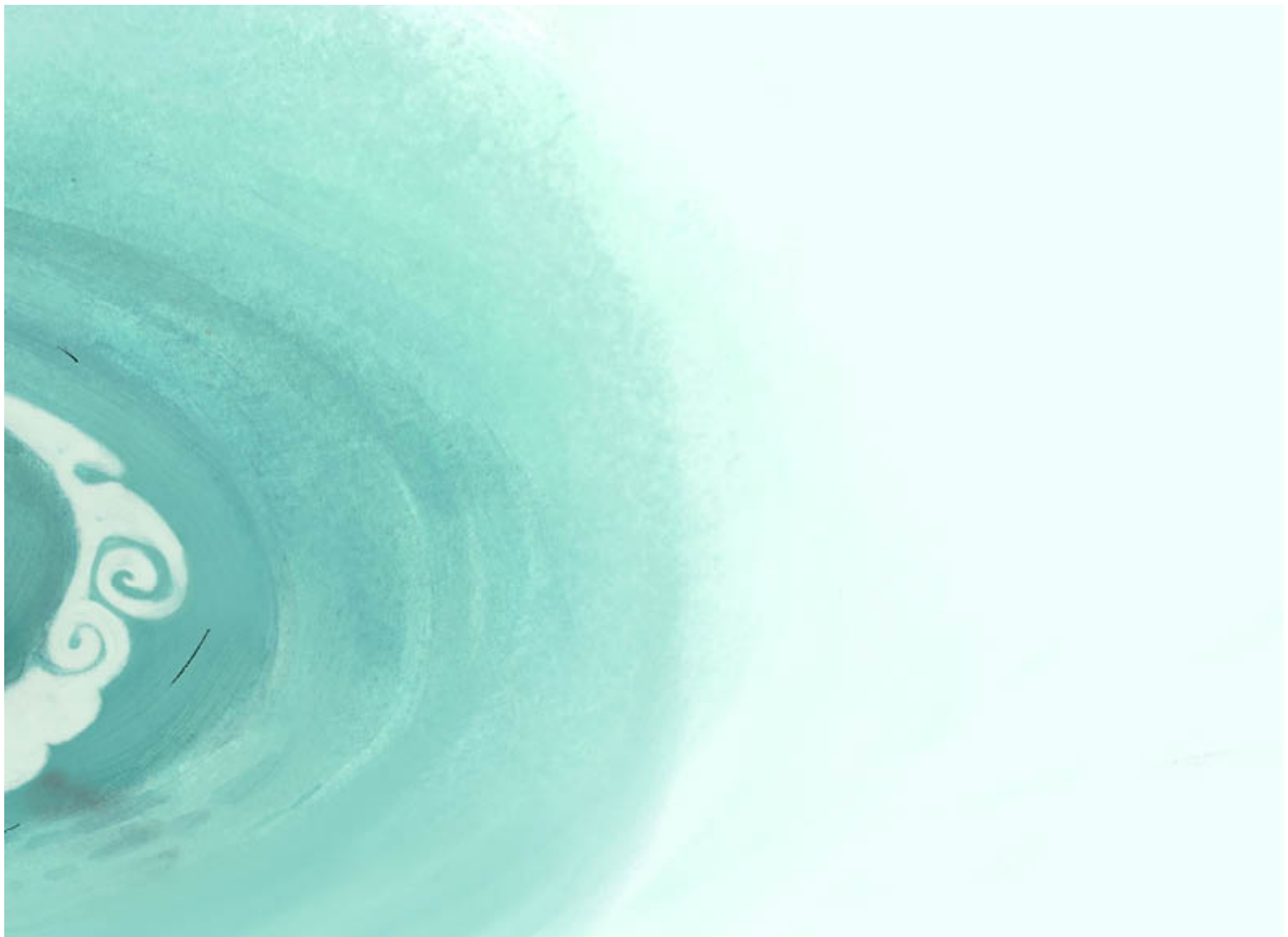
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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION

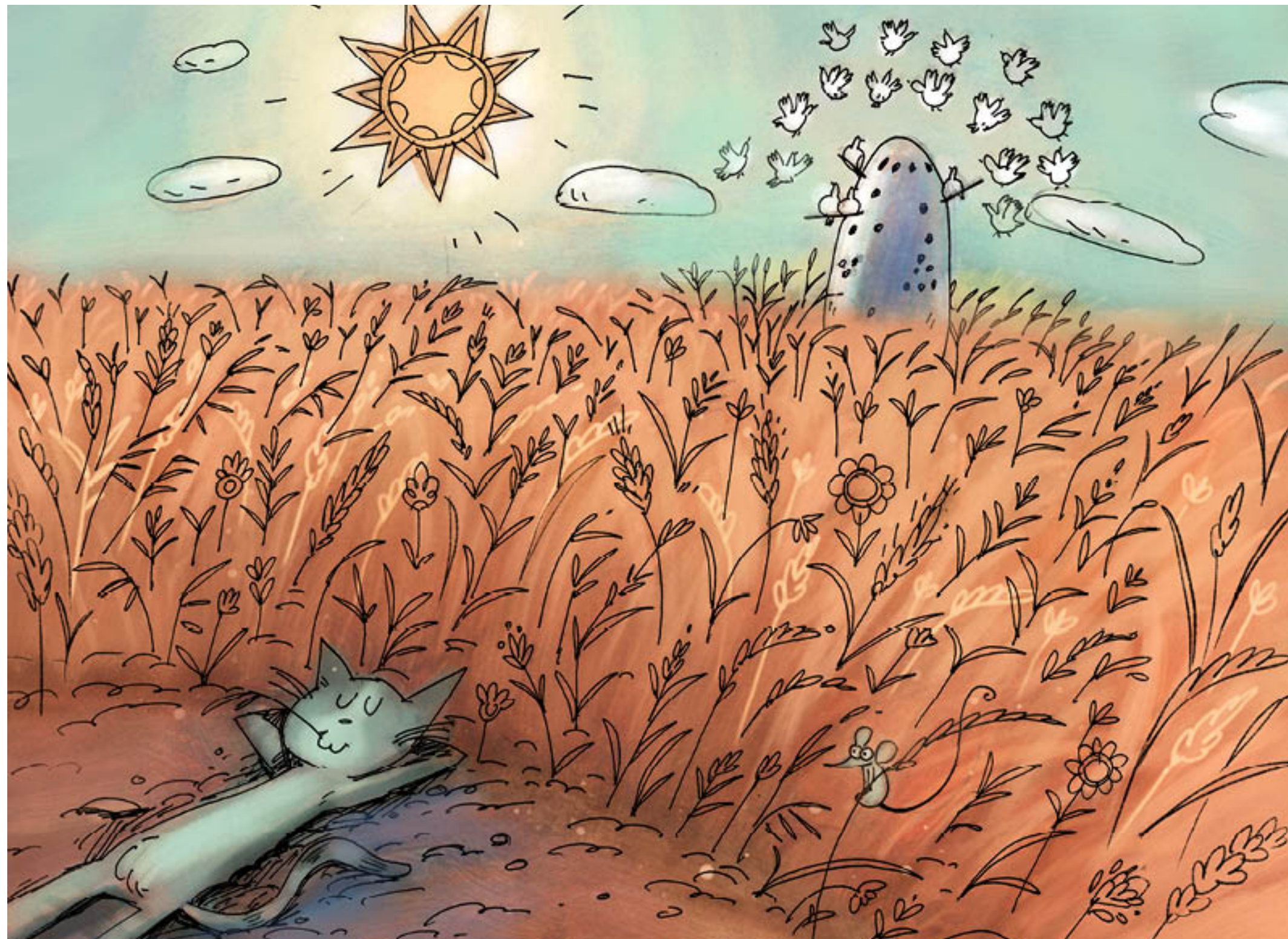




Dedicated to the sense of imagination
which lives within us all.



Once upon a time, there was a cat that lived in a field
beside a wide, wide river.



He often wished that he could swim.

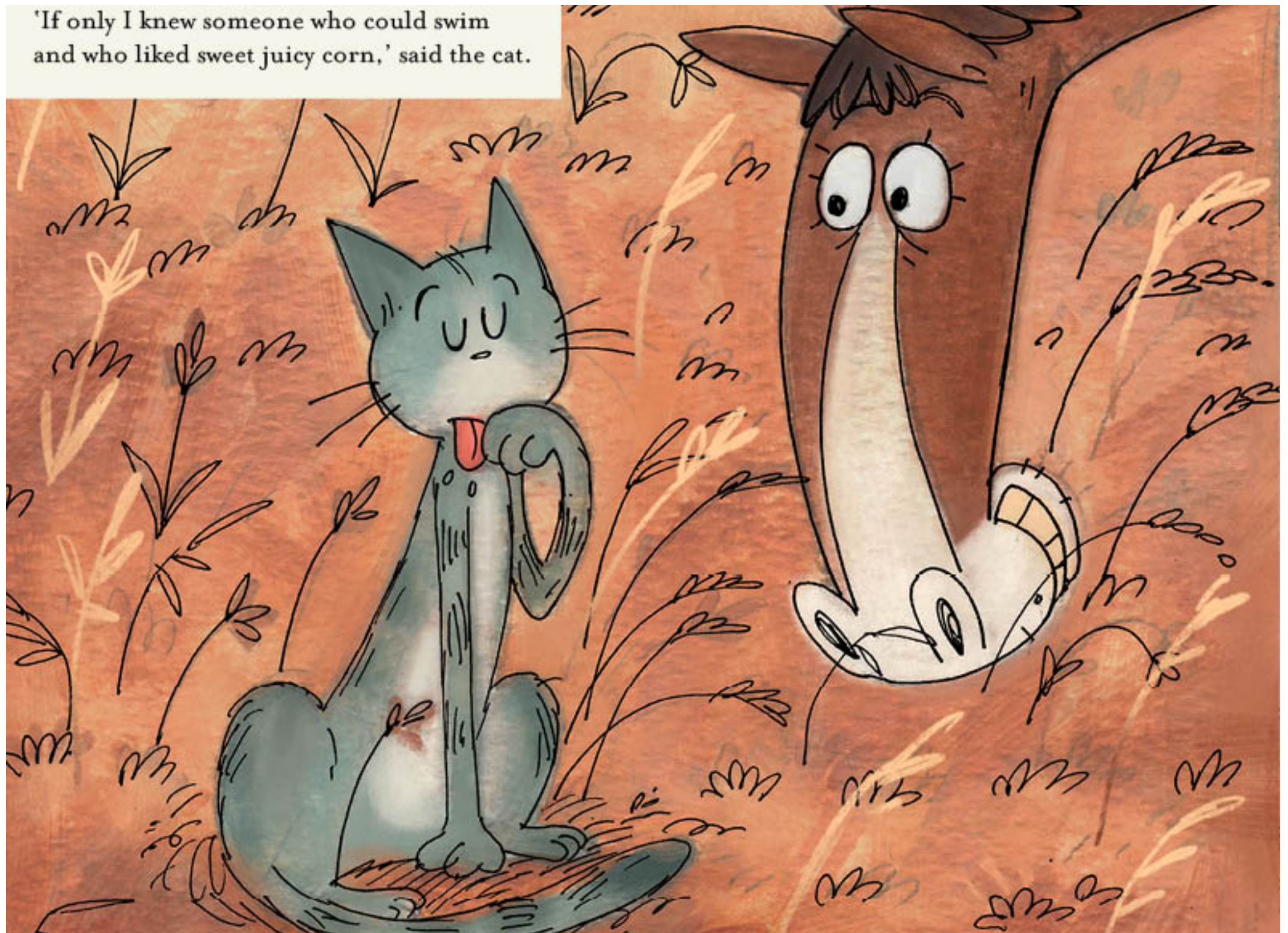




Because, that way, he might cross the river, reaching the large and well-stocked pigeon-house, which was on the other side.



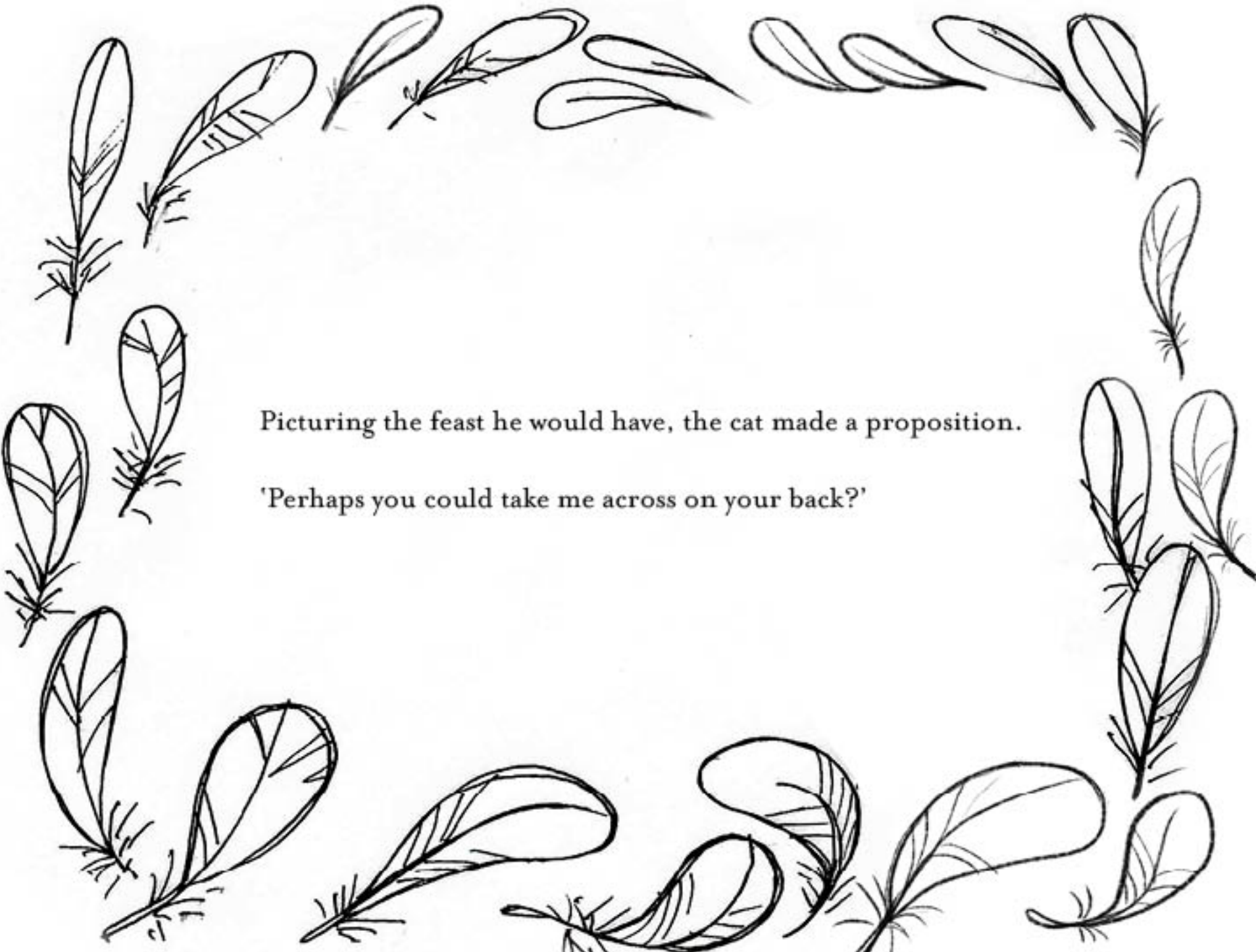
'If only I knew someone who could swim
and who liked sweet juicy corn,' said the cat.



Because that delectable golden corn really
is wasted on those fat foolish pigeons.



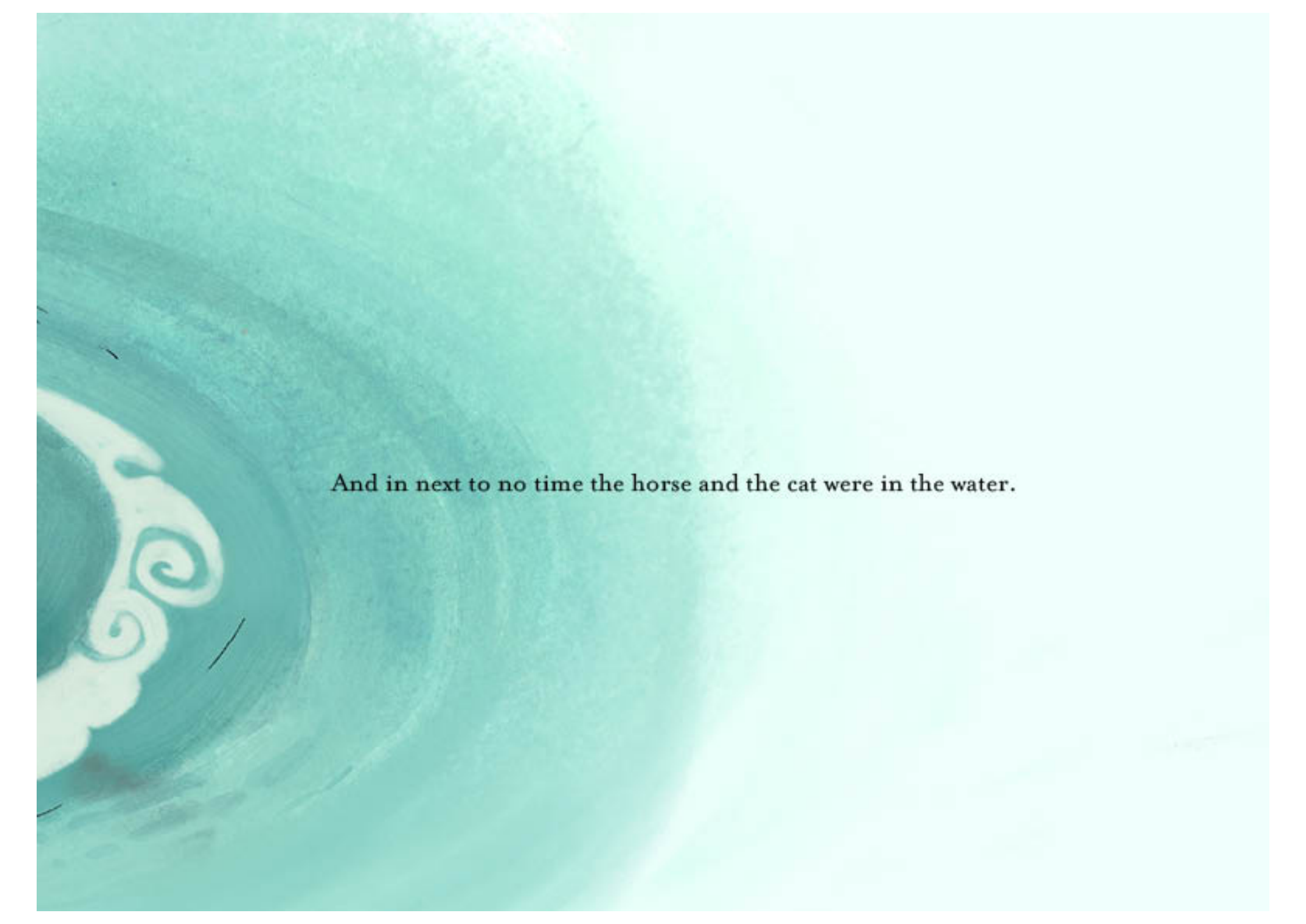
'What a coincidence,' said the horse, 'I'm thinking of swimming across the river, to graze on some of that lovely ripening corn on the other side.'

A circular arrangement of various feathers, including long quills, downy feathers, and smaller plumes, framing the central text.

Picturing the feast he would have, the cat made a proposition.

'Perhaps you could take me across on your back?'






And in next to no time the horse and the cat were in the water.

On the opposite bank, the horse slowly started to graze.

While the cat immediately leapt upon the pigeons.







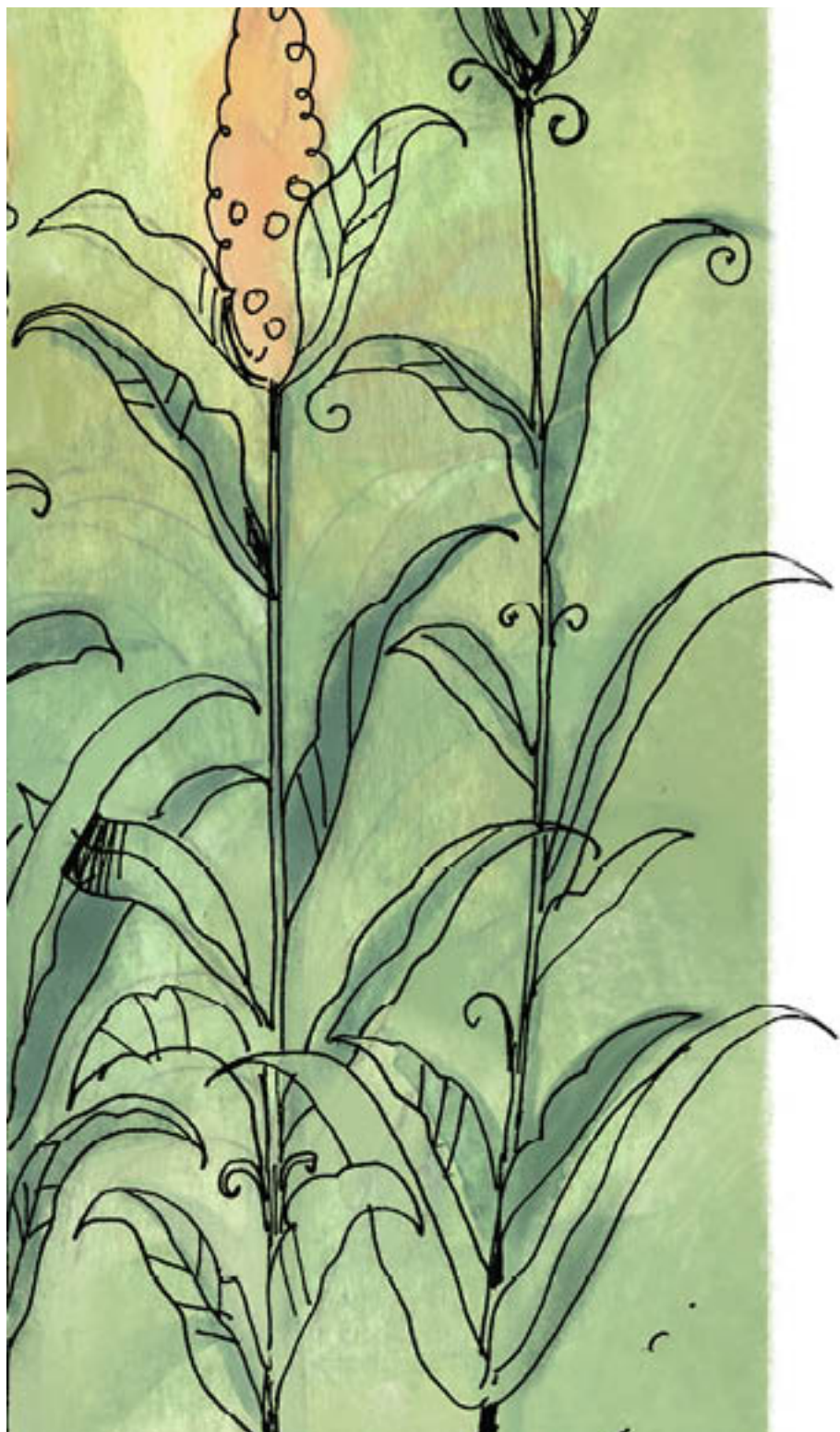
In just a few seconds, the cat had caught several birds.

In a few seconds more, he had gorged himself.

And in a matter of minutes, he was fit to burst.








Unable to eat another mouthful, the cat started to yowl as loud as he could.

'What delicious birds those were!' he sobbed.

'Shhhh!' cried the horse, still munching.





But the cat kept on making a terrible din.

'Keep the noise down!' hissed the horse, his mouth full of corn.

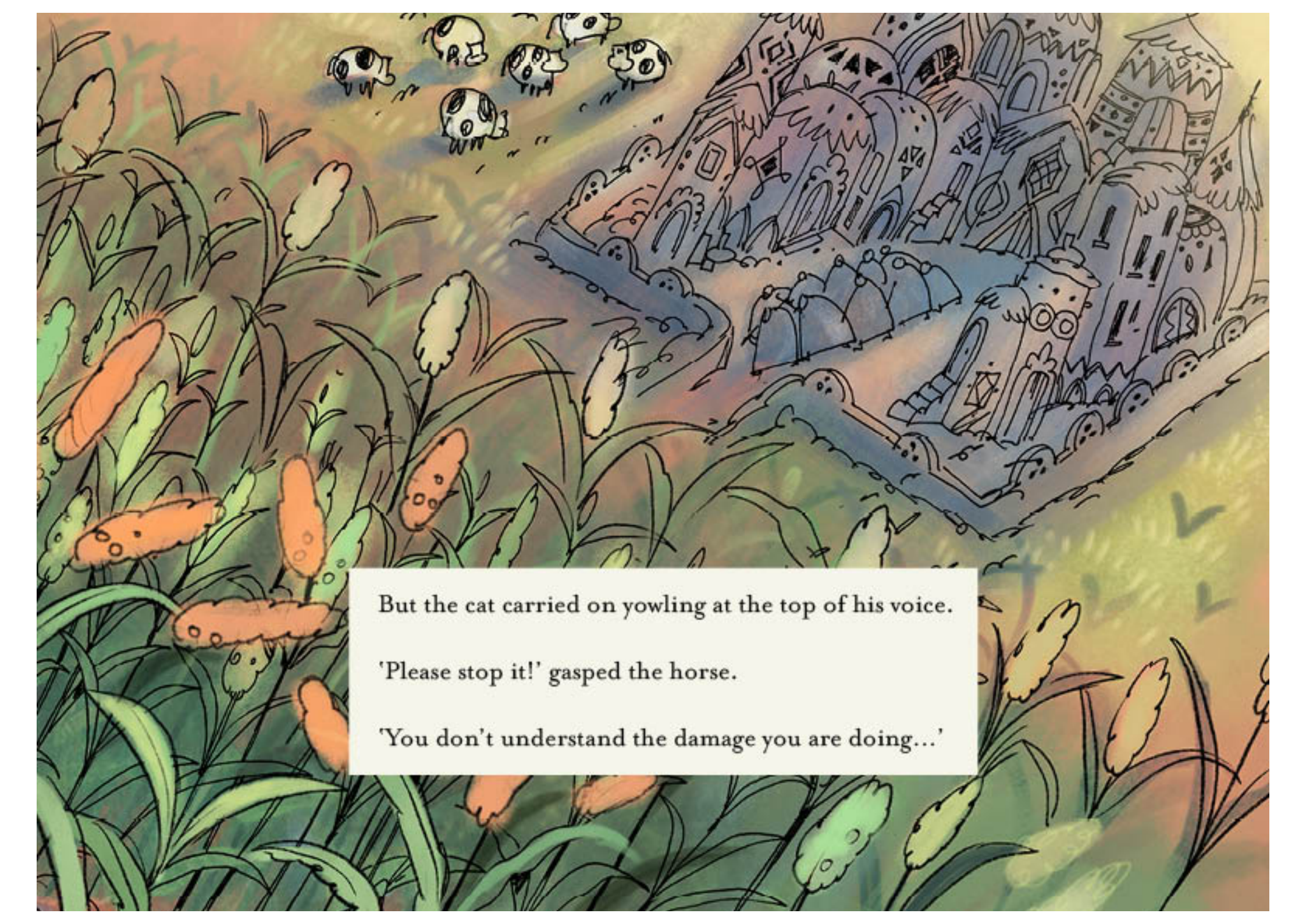
'The villagers will come out, if they hear that awful racket.

And they'll do us all sorts of harm!'









But the cat carried on yowling at the top of his voice.

'Please stop it!' gasped the horse.

'You don't understand the damage you are doing...'

'I simply cannot help it, my friend,' screeched the cat,
the tears still streaming from his eyes.



'I always do this after I have eaten.

It's simply the way I am.'



The horse was extremely annoyed.

It took him longer than the cat to eat his fill.

And he wasn't yet ready to leave the delicious cornfield.



But the cat continued to caterwaul.
And it wasn't long before the villagers heard his cries.







They came charging into the cornfield,
brandishing sticks and hurling stones.

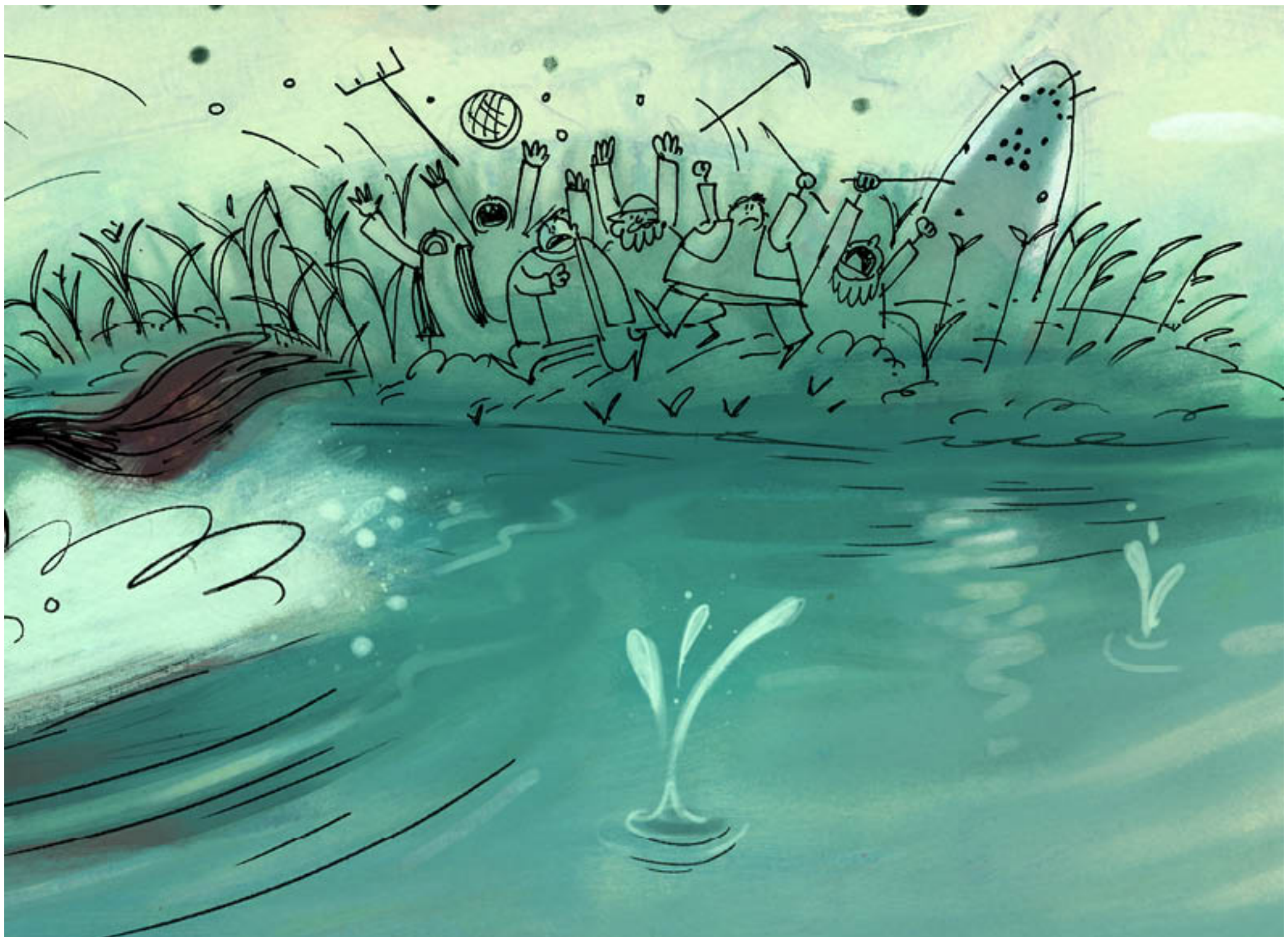


Giving the horse no option but to stop eating.



With the cat on his back,
he fled across the river once more.

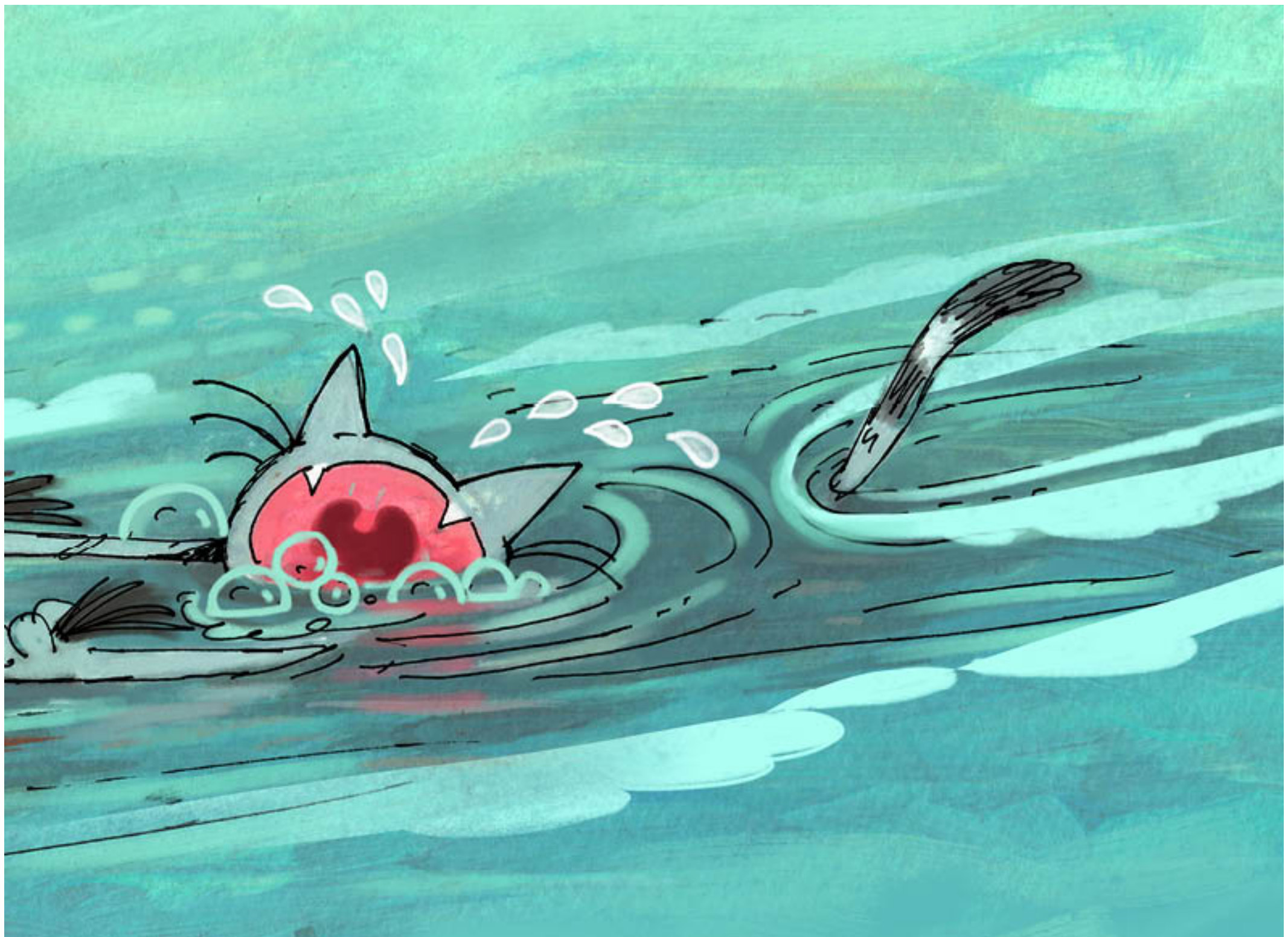




'You've ruined everything!' the horse complained to his companion.

'Now we can't go back, and I'm still hungry.'

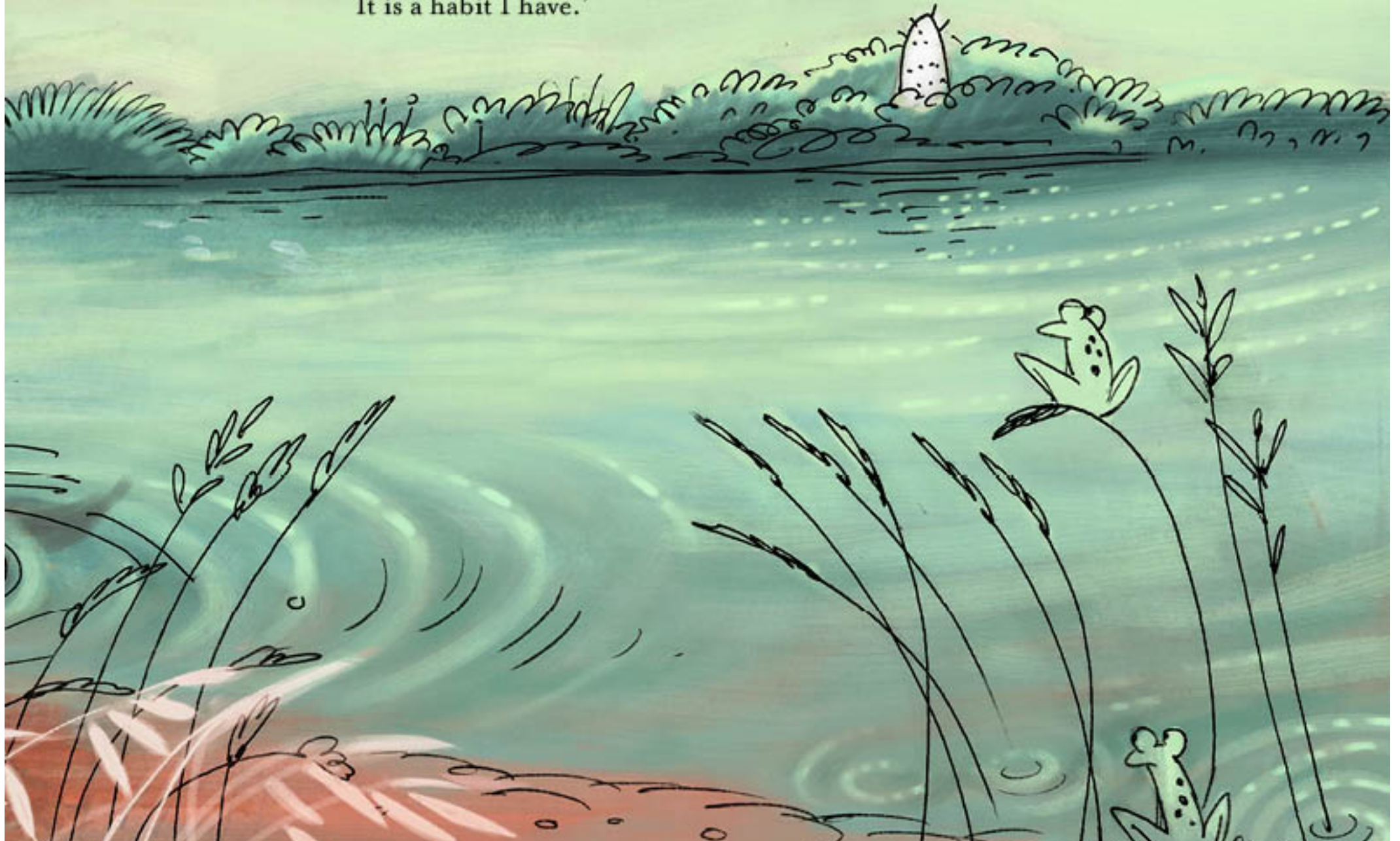






'I've told you,' gasped the dripping feline,
as they scrambled up the river bank,

'It is simply the way I am.
It is a habit I have.'



Suddenly, the horse dropped to the ground.

And started to roll on the grass...

...trapping the cat beneath him.







'Stop it!' gasped the cat.
'You're squashing me!'

'I can feel my backbone crunching!
'You don't understand the damage you are doing...'



'Oh well, my friend,' whinnied the horse.
'That is simply the way I am.
It is a habit I have.'



The
End



During his lifetime, Idries Shah published many hundreds of stories, drawn from the rich cultural heritage of Eastern lands. A great many of Shah's tales have their roots in his own homeland, Afghanistan. As with all great stories, they work on many levels — entertaining the listener, while imparting a teaching message, an element that is in itself of profound value.

Shah used to say that a well-crafted tale is like a peach. Refreshing and tantalising to the senses, the delicious flesh is why we regard peaches so highly. But it is the stone that lies within the fruit that is the thing of real value — like the message of the story passed on by appreciating a piece of fruit's succulent flesh.

Beautifully illustrated, *Speak First and Lose* has been presented by The Idries Shah Foundation as a cornerstone in an important charitable and cultural project. This series of illustrated children's books has been made available in the West, with all proceeds from the sales going to provide free editions of the same books for children in Afghanistan.

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SPEAK FIRST AND LOSE IDRIES SHAH

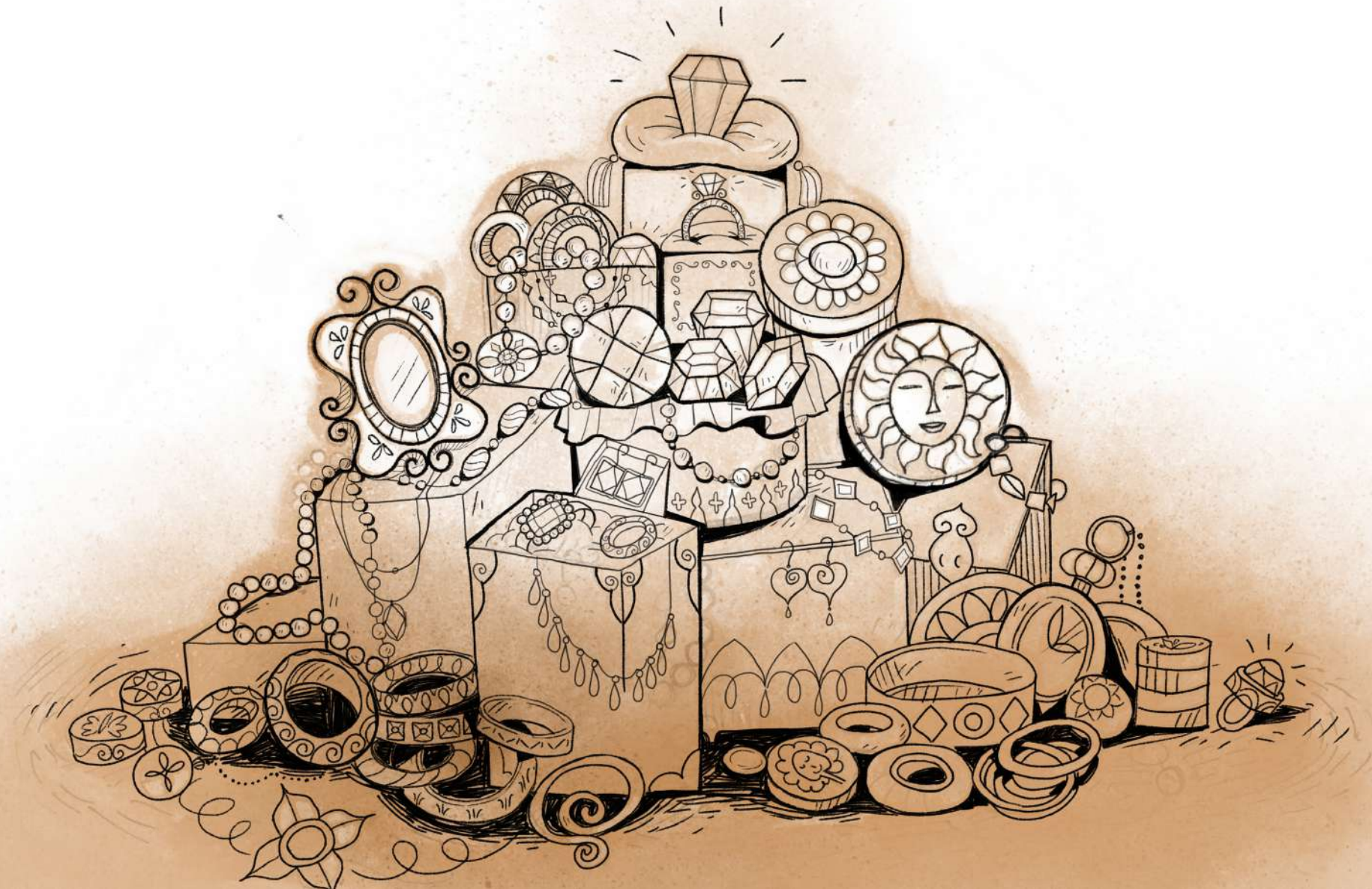
SPEAK FIRST AND LOSE

BY IDRIES SHAH



ILLUSTRATED BY DABY ZAINAB FAIDHI

Speak First And Lose



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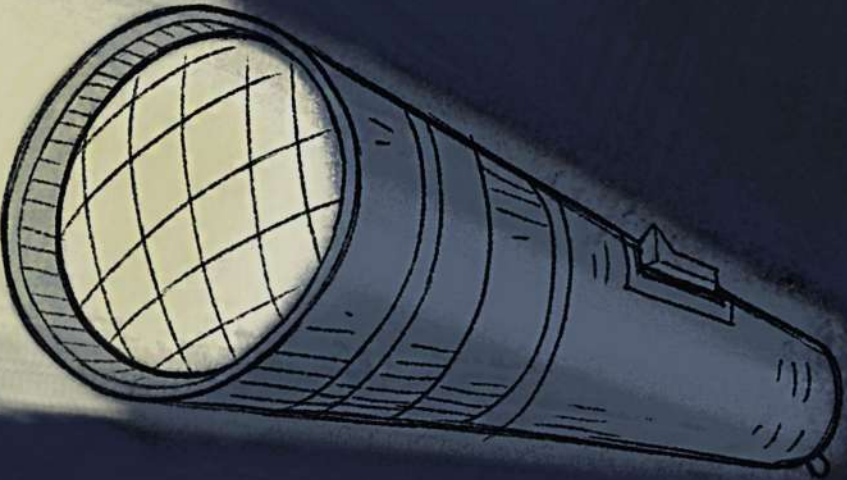
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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



Speak First And Lose

BY IDRIES SHAH



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- The Horrible Dib Dib
- The Fisherman’s Neighbour
- The Magic Potion of Oinkink
- The Rich Man and the Monkey
- The Boy With No Voice and the Men Who Couldn’t Hear
- The Tale of Melon City

Dedicated to the sense of imagination which lives within us all.



One day, a newly married couple
moved into their new home.



At first, they were the happiest newly-weds imaginable.



But once the presents were opened...



...they started to quarrel.



'Shut the door, there is a draught,' said the husband.
'I am not a slave,' answered the wife. 'Shut it yourself!'





'Tell you what,' said the husband, 'let's see who can keep silent the longest. The first person to speak closes the door.'

His wife nodded her agreement and they sat down, with the draught whistling around them.



The night wore on.



Neither one of them moved.

Some thieves, passing by, saw the open door and walked in.





They closely examined everything in the house.



Including the man and his wife.



Whom they took to be statues.



They stripped the house.
And even took the wife's jewellery.



Still neither the man nor his wife had moved or said a word.

Finding the couple's door open,
the night watchman came into
the room.





'Shut your door!' said the captain of the watch. But neither the man nor his wife moved.



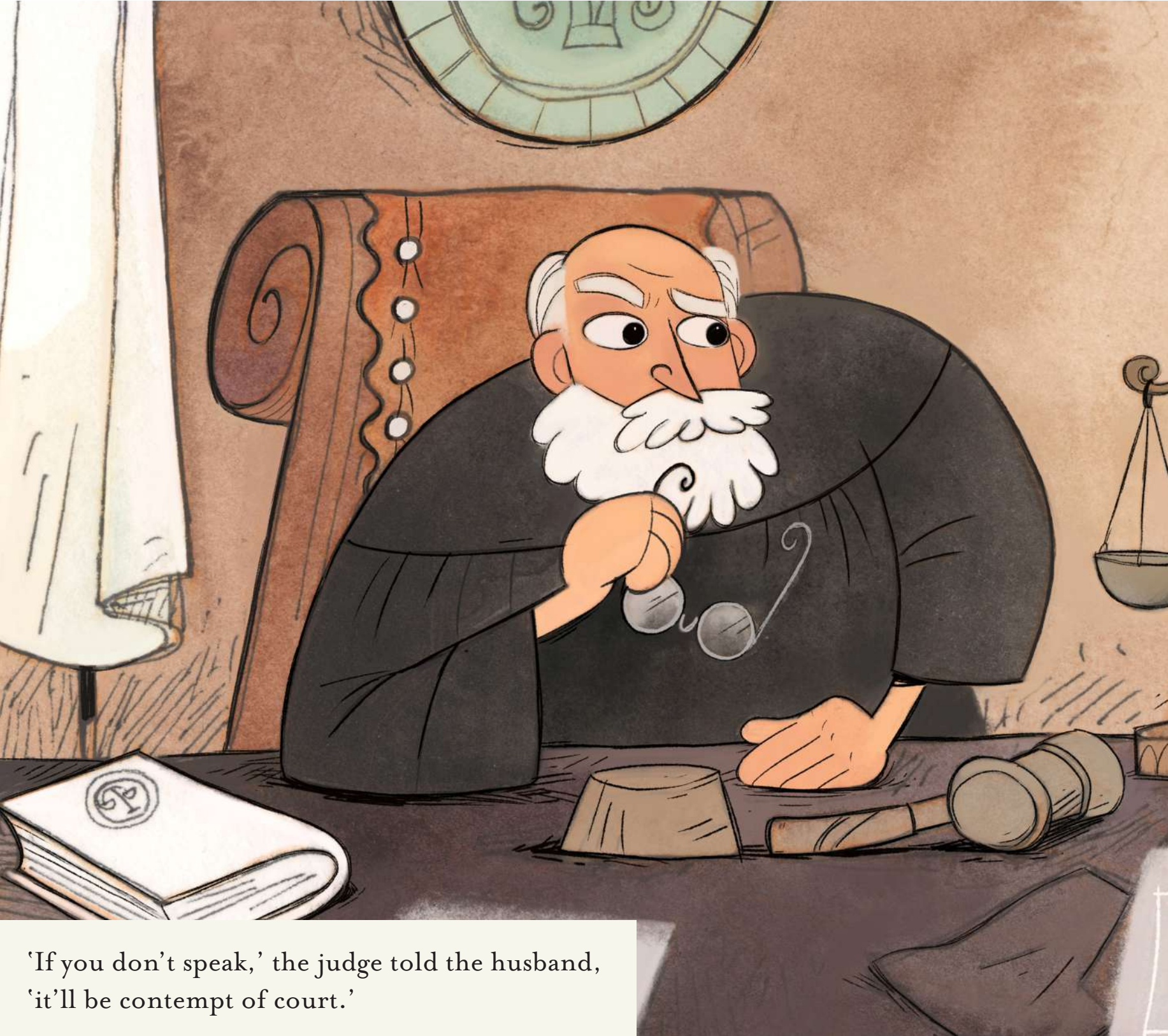
'You must obey the orders of the watch!' yelled the captain of the watch.



Unable to elicit any response,
the men of the watch dragged the couple to jail.



In the morning, they were taken before the judge, charged with having defied the watch.



'If you don't speak,' the judge told the husband, 'it'll be contempt of court.'



Getting no reply, the judge growled: 'That's it! I'll have you whipped!'

Suddenly
the woman
cried out!



‘Don’t hurt my husband!’



'Ha!' shouted her spouse.
'You have lost the bet!'





'Now you have to close the door.'



And I wish that I could
tell you that the man
and his wife lived happily
ever after.



The End



The Horrible Dib Dib

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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



Dedicated to the sense of imagination
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One night, a thief intending to rob an old woman,
crept through the open window of her home, and listened.



'Aah ... the Dib Dib, the horrible Dib Dib!

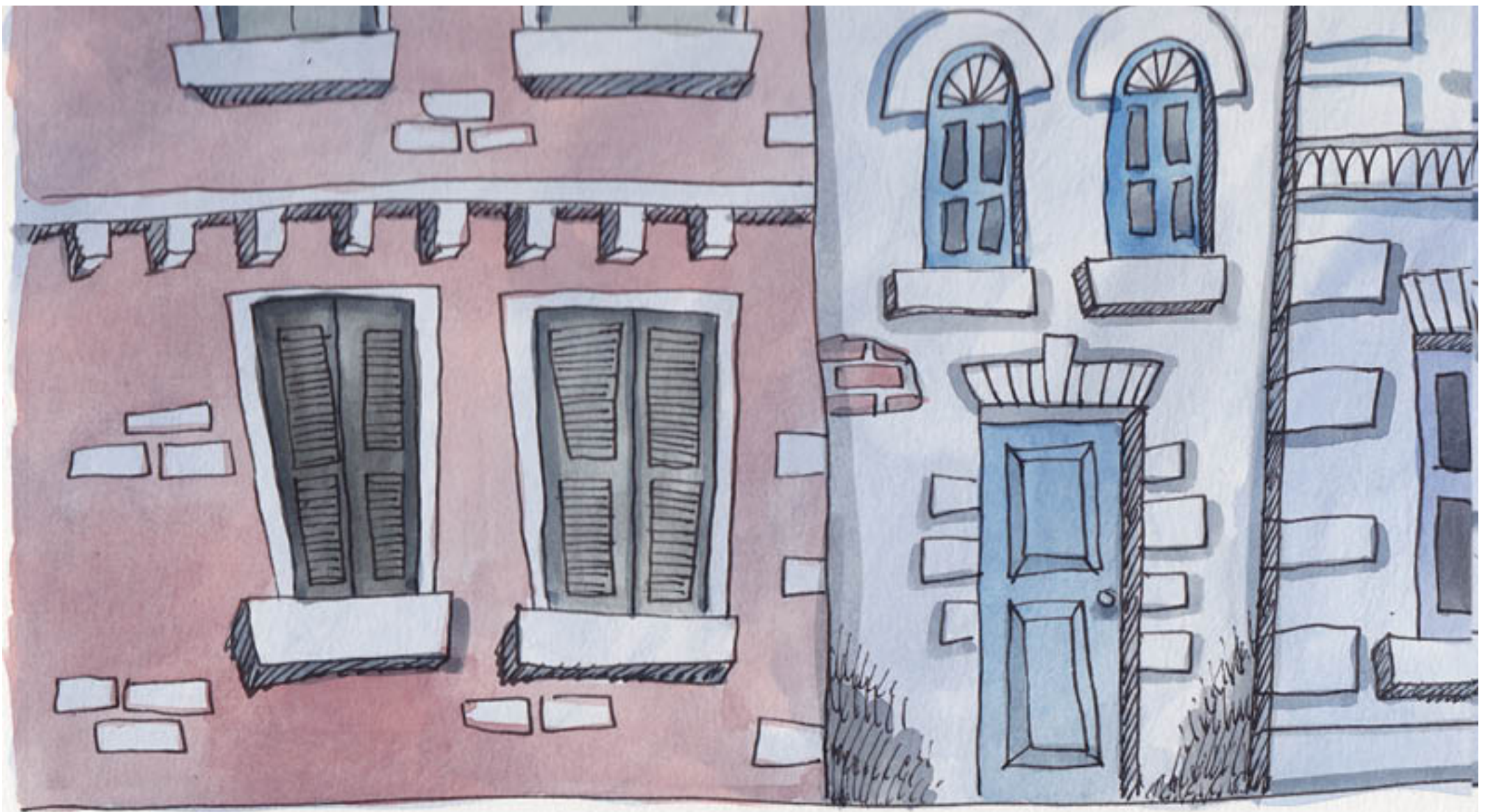
This abominable Dib Dib will be the death of me,' cried the old woman's feeble voice.



'What on earth is this awful Dib Dib?' wondered the thief,
and 'could I have become infected, standing so close to this poor diseased woman?'

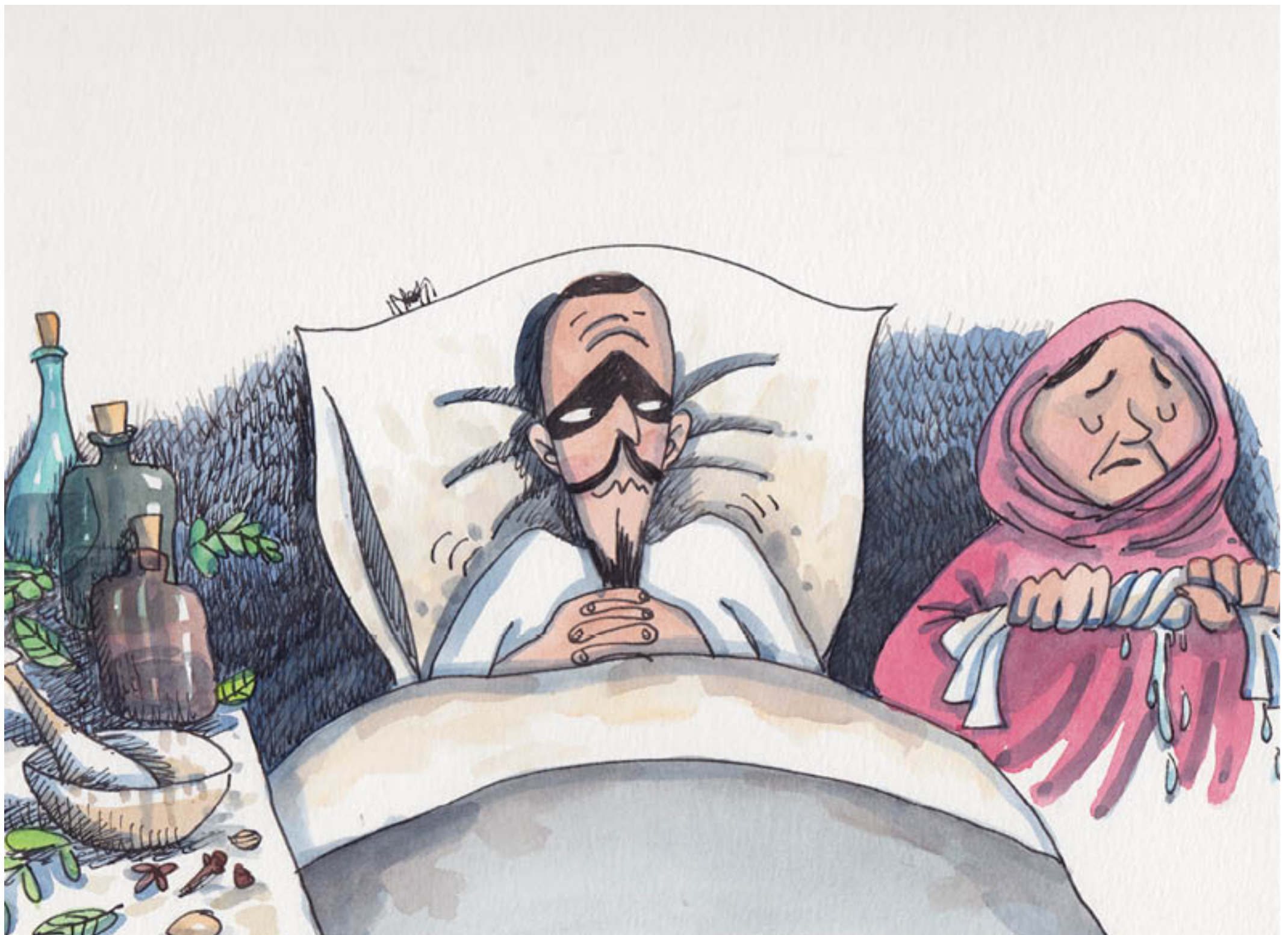
In fact, the more he thought about it, the surer the thief became that he had indeed caught the horrible illness of which she spoke.





It wasn't long before he was shaking uncontrollably, only just managing to totter home.





Seeing her husband in this enfeebled state, the thief's wife put him to bed, mopping his brow, as he groaned:

'Oh the sinister Dib Dib, how can there be any doubt that the deadly Dib Dib has got me in its grip . . .'



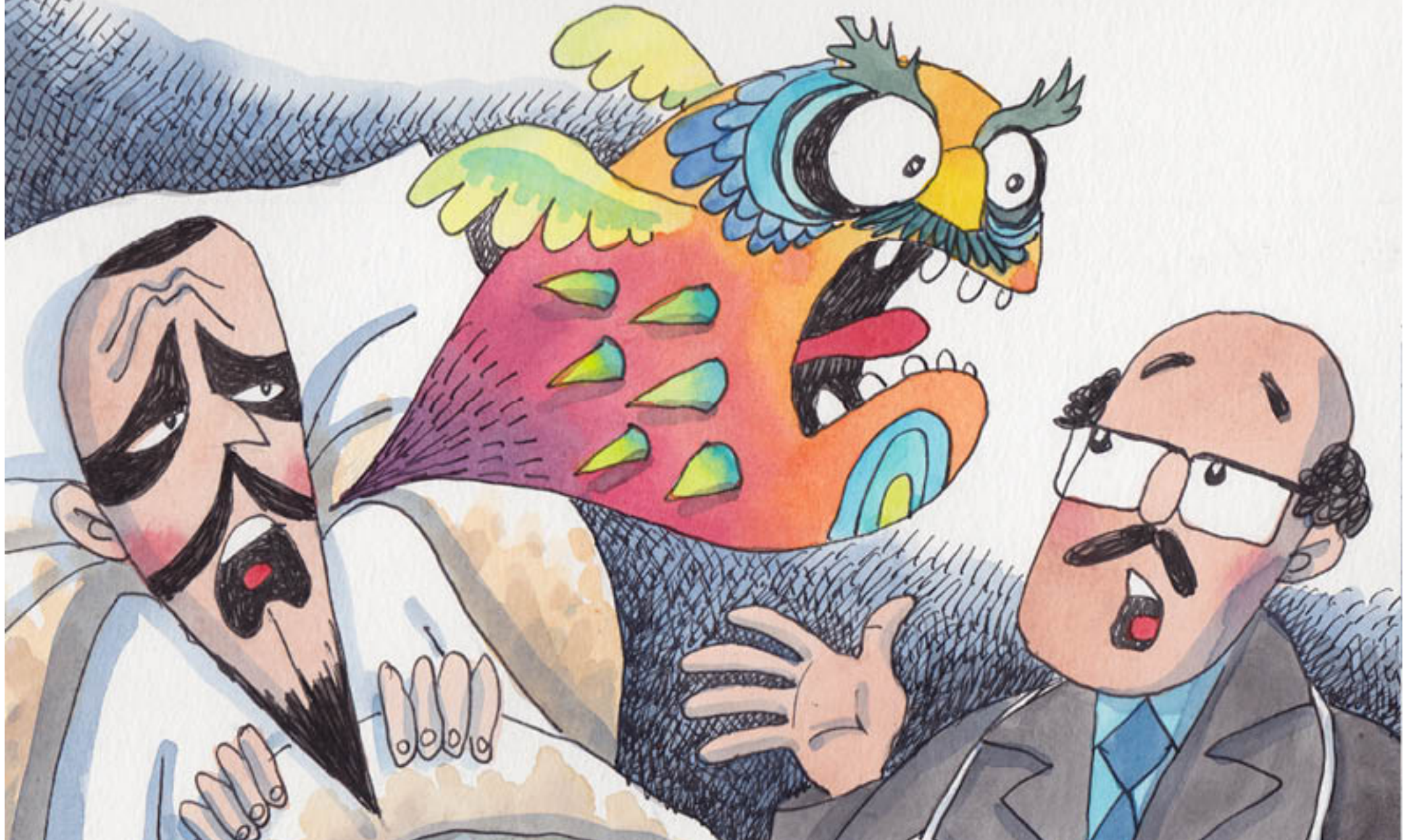


Very worried indeed, the thief's wife rushed off to fetch the doctor.

When the thief saw the doctor, he was even more convinced that his final hours had come.



'The old woman at the end of the road has the accursed Dib Dib
and it has flown from her to infect me.'



'My son,' said the doctor, wracking his brain to think of such a lethal flying illness.

'Your remaining hours may be few, take this time to repent and pray for mercy.'



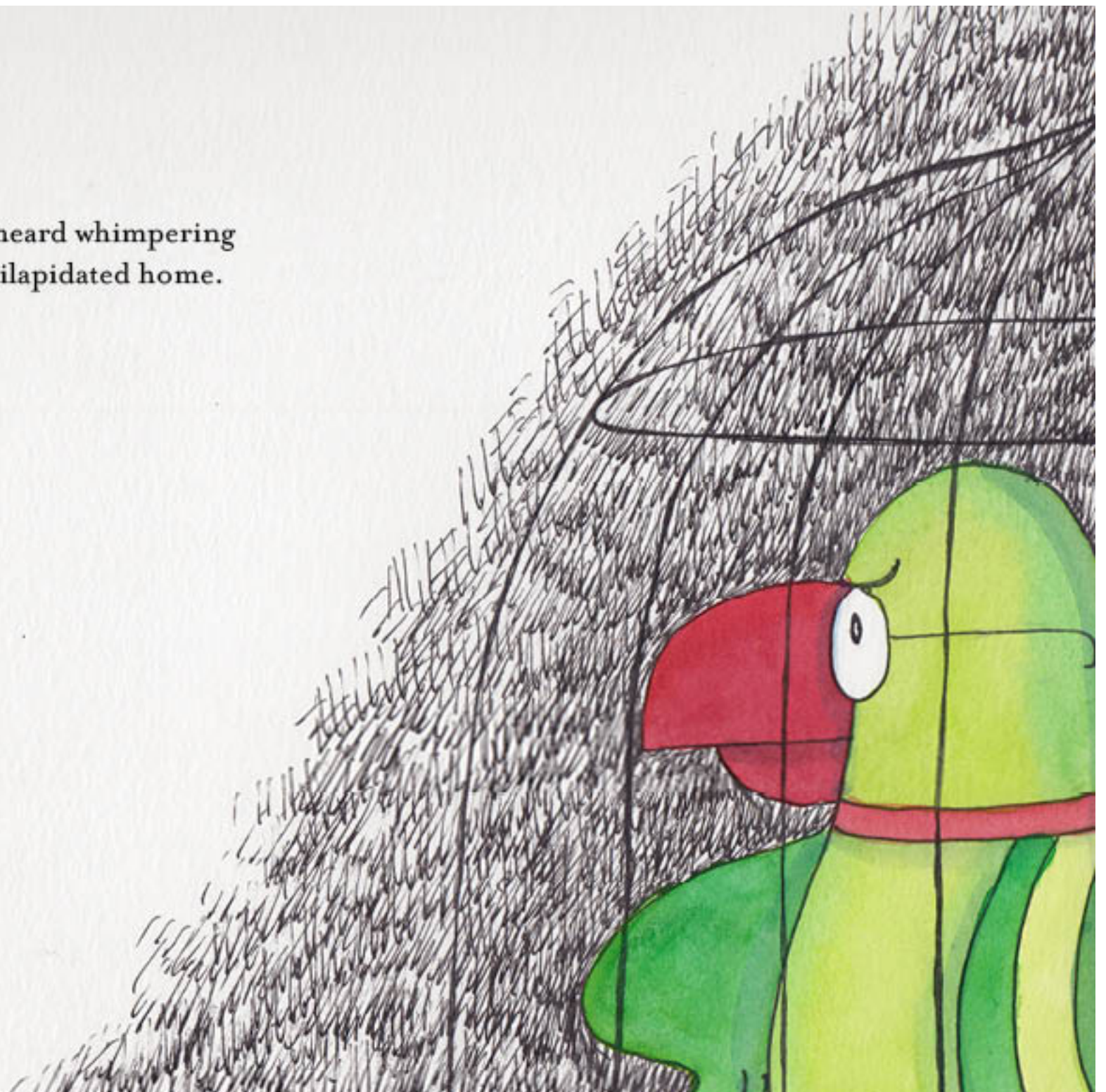




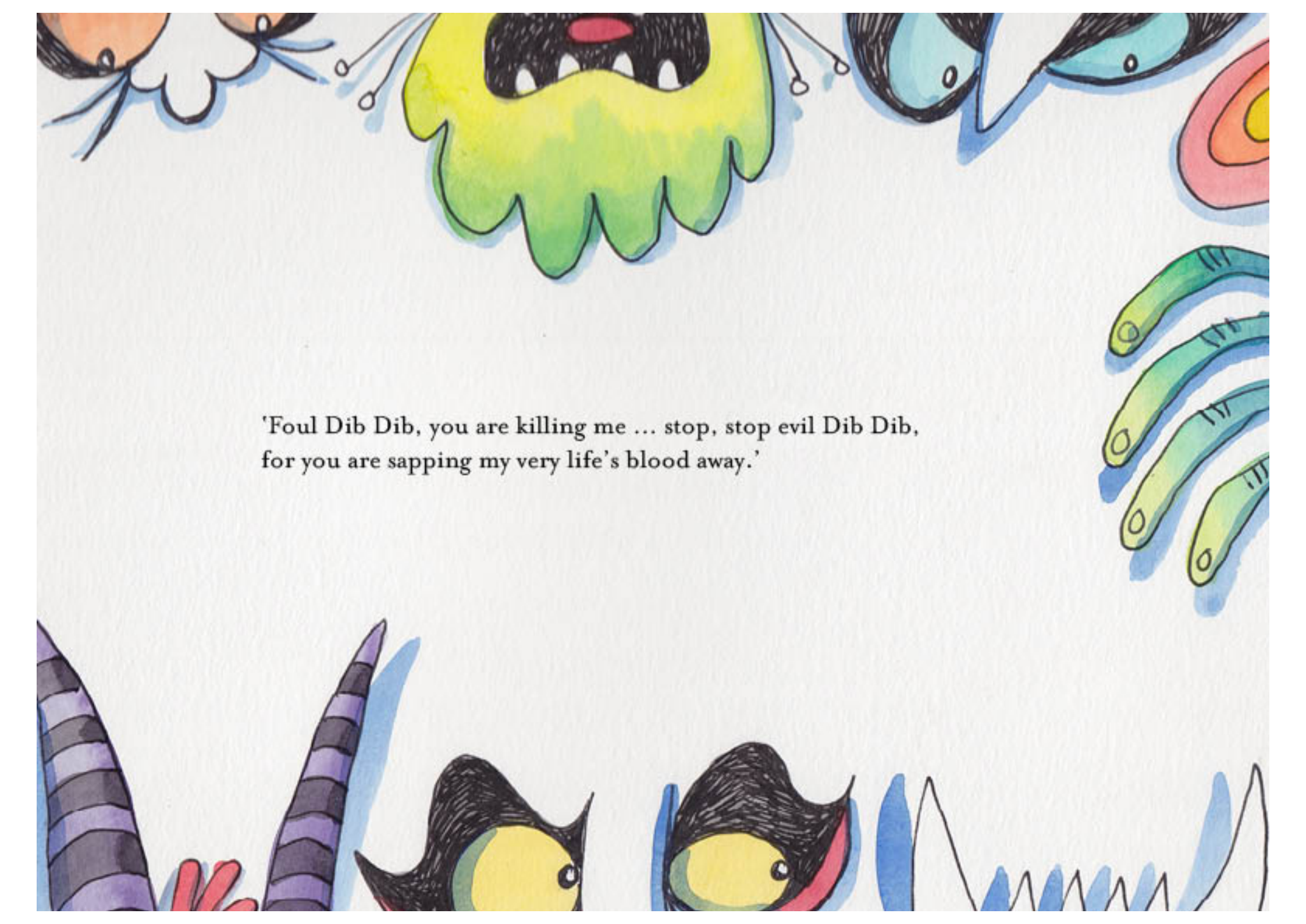
The doctor then hurried off to the old woman's cottage,
dreading the medical horrors he would find.



Sure enough, he heard whimpering
from within the dilapidated home.



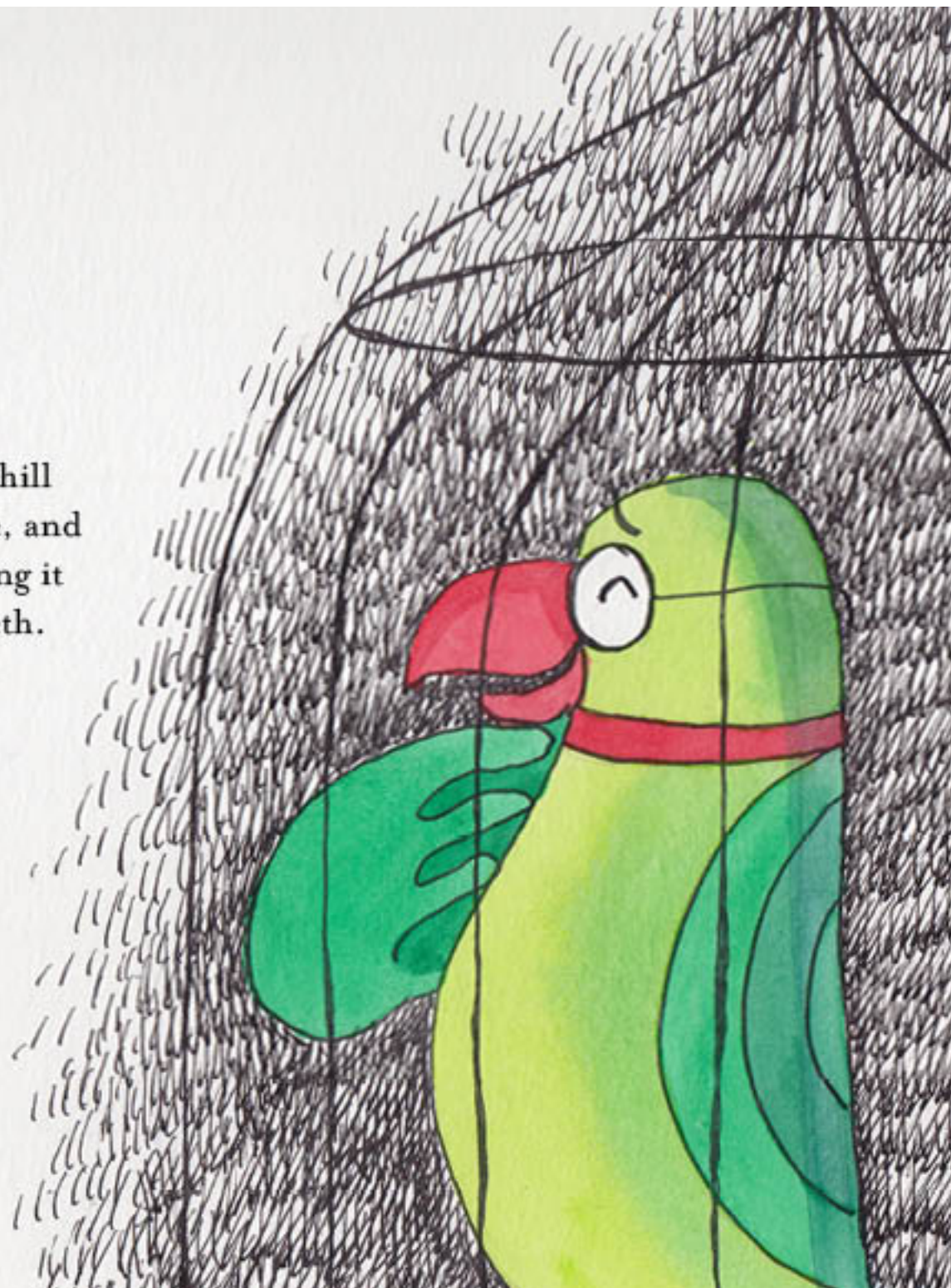




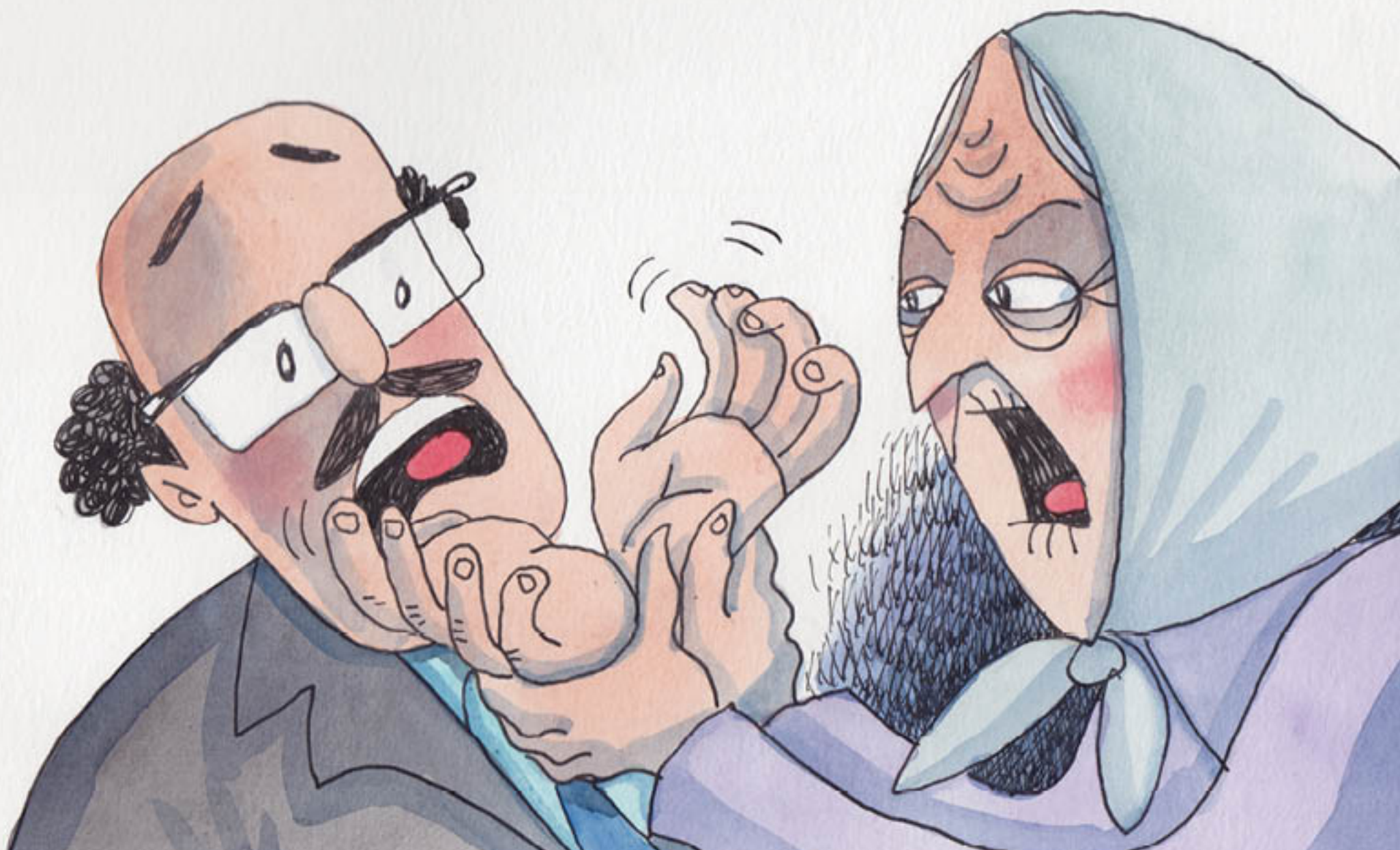
'Foul Dib Dib, you are killing me ... stop, stop evil Dib Dib,
for you are sapping my very life's blood away.'



The doctor now began to feel as if an eerie chill had passed through him. He started to shake, and his hands clutched the window-frame, causing it to rattle like the chattering of a thousand teeth.

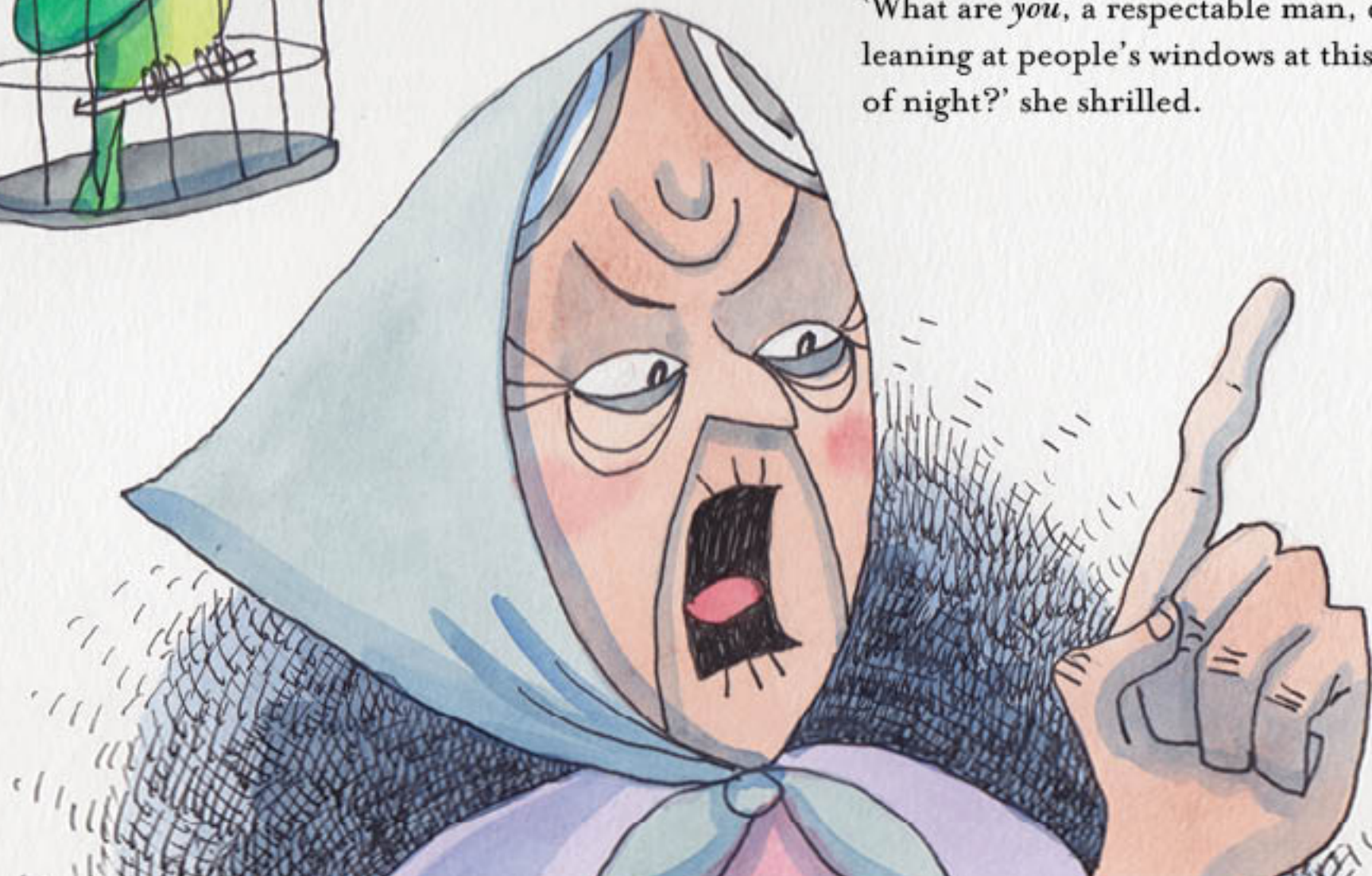


At this alarming sound, the old woman leapt from her chair and seized the now terrified doctor by his quivering hands.





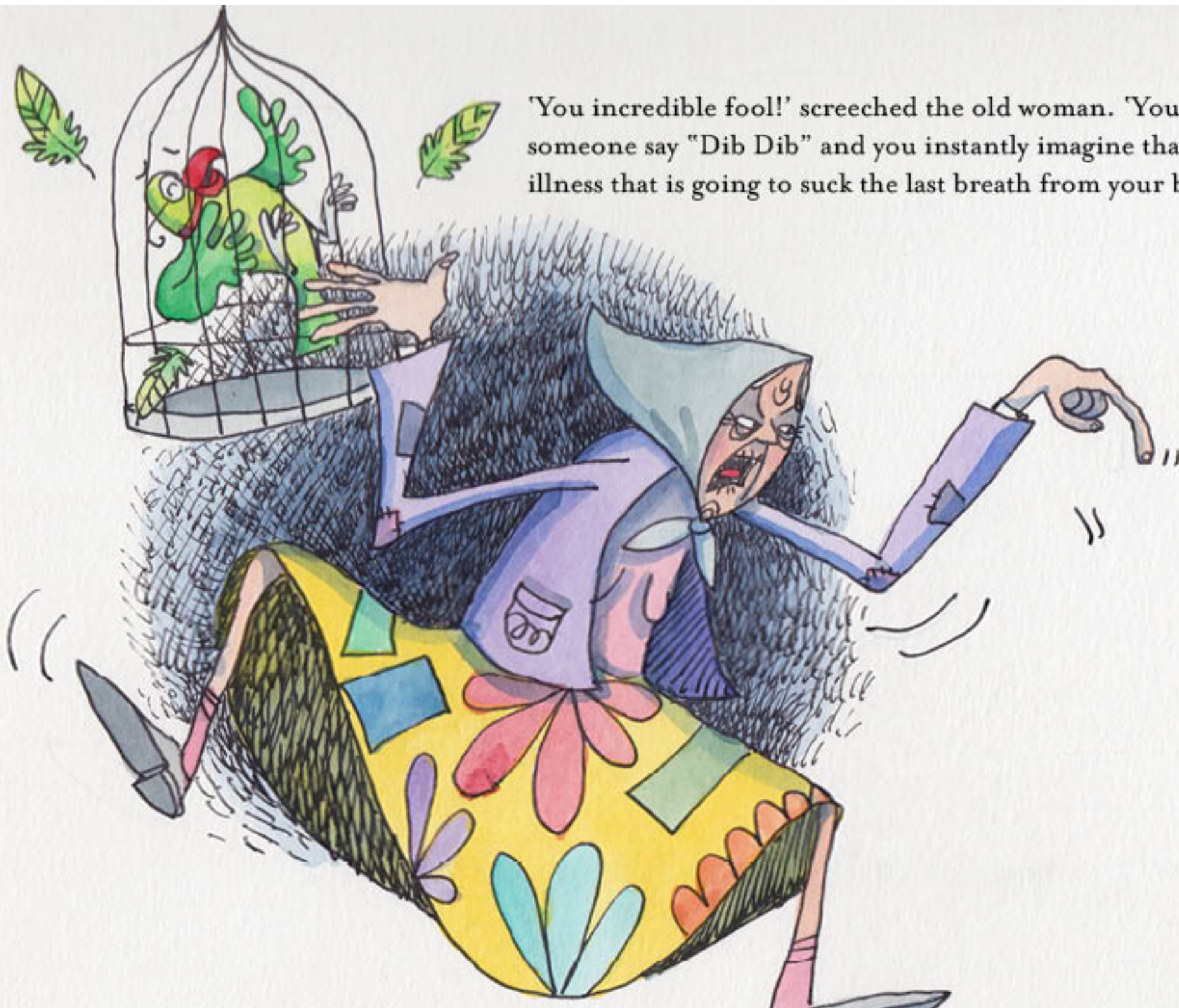
'What are *you*, a respectable man, doing leaning at people's windows at this time of night?' she shrilled.

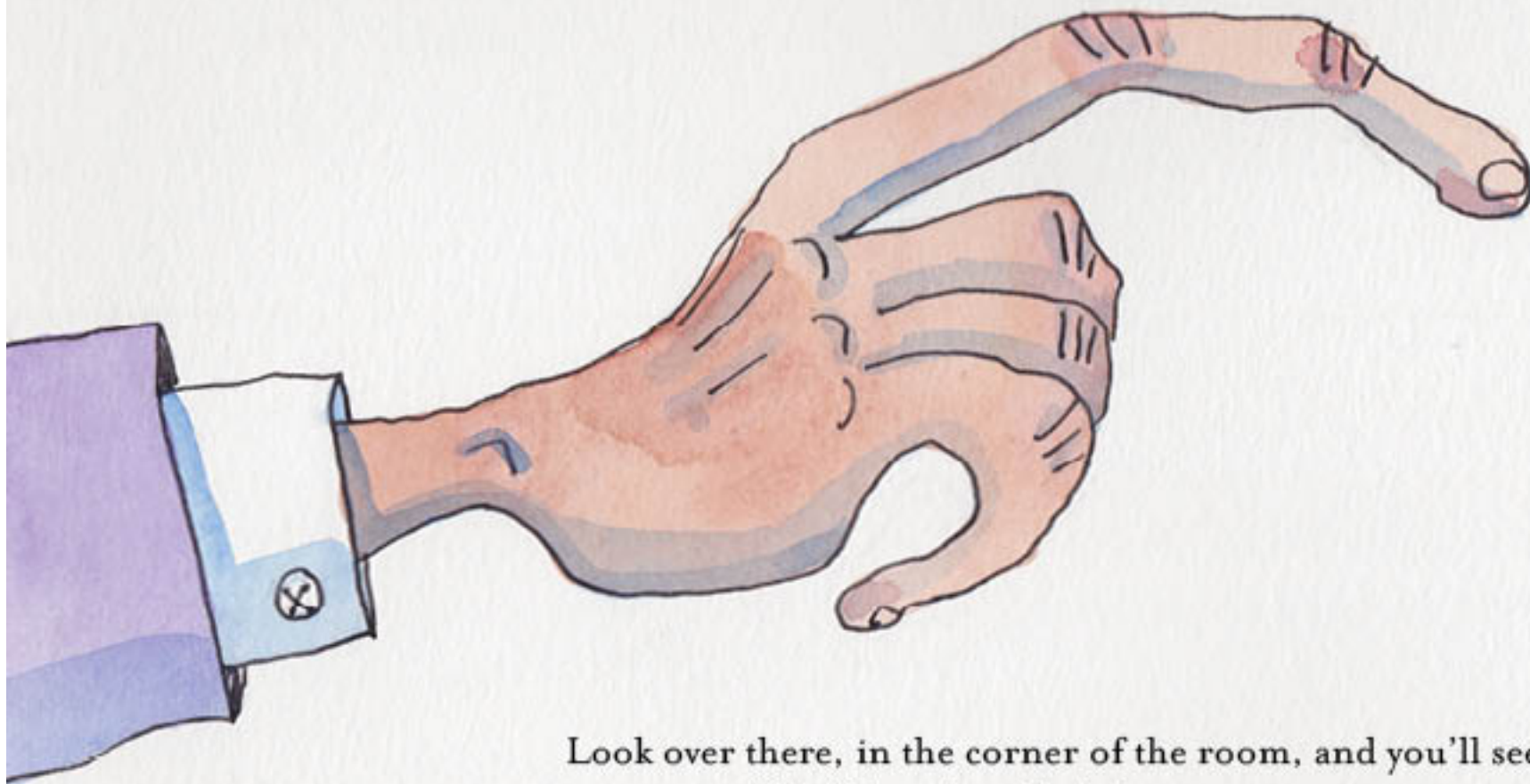


'Good but unfortunate woman!' faltered the doctor theatrically, 'I heard you speak of the awful Dib Dib, and now I fear that it has its clutches upon my heart, as well as upon your own!'



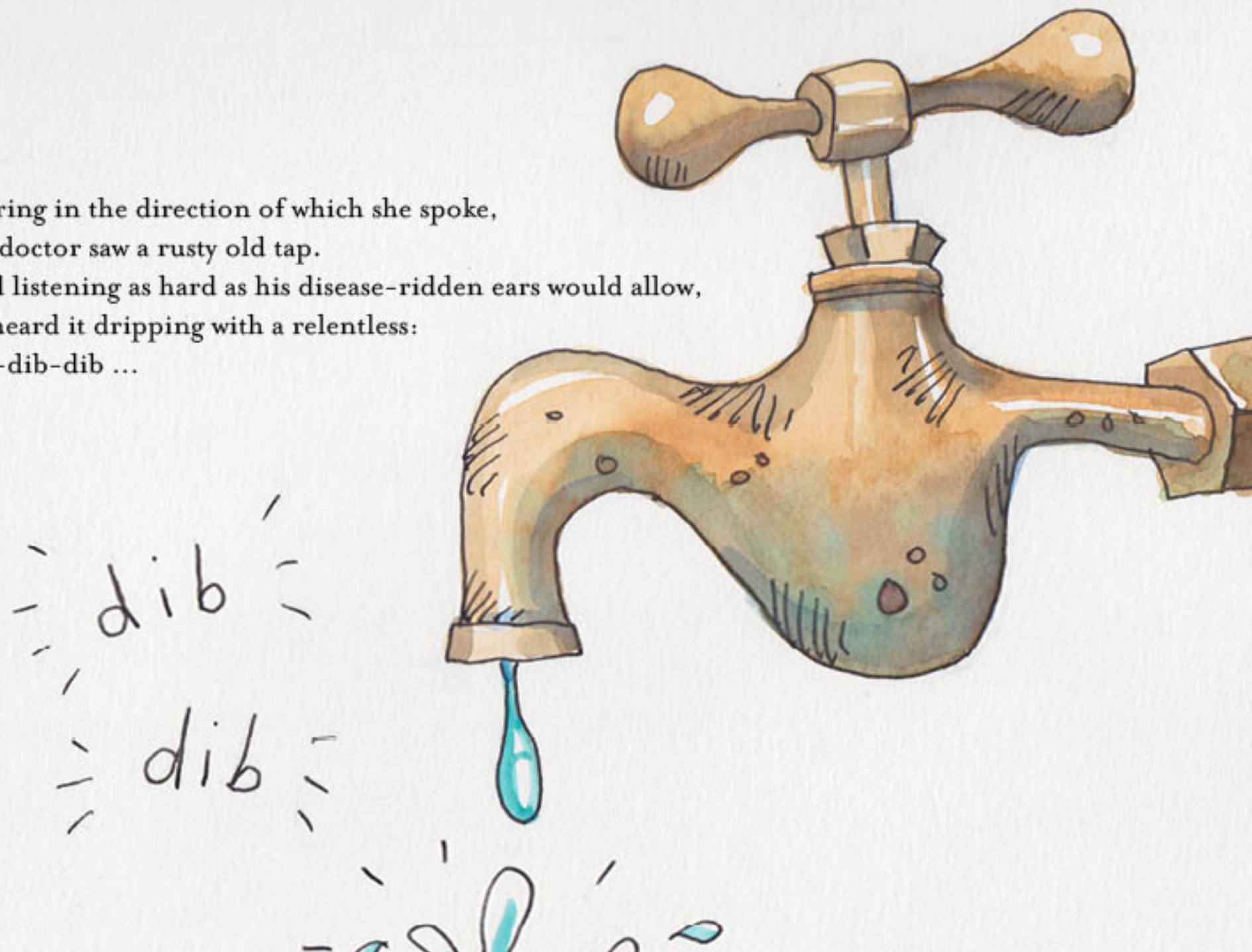
'You incredible fool!' screeched the old woman. 'You hear someone say "Dib Dib" and you instantly imagine that it's a lethal illness that is going to suck the last breath from your body!'





Look over there, in the corner of the room, and you'll see the monstrous Dib Dib as it really is.'

Peering in the direction of which she spoke,
the doctor saw a rusty old tap.
And listening as hard as his disease-ridden ears would allow,
he heard it dripping with a relentless:
dib-dib-dib ...





Sheepishly he left the house, having found that his life-threatening symptoms had vanished as quickly as they had started, just a few minutes before.



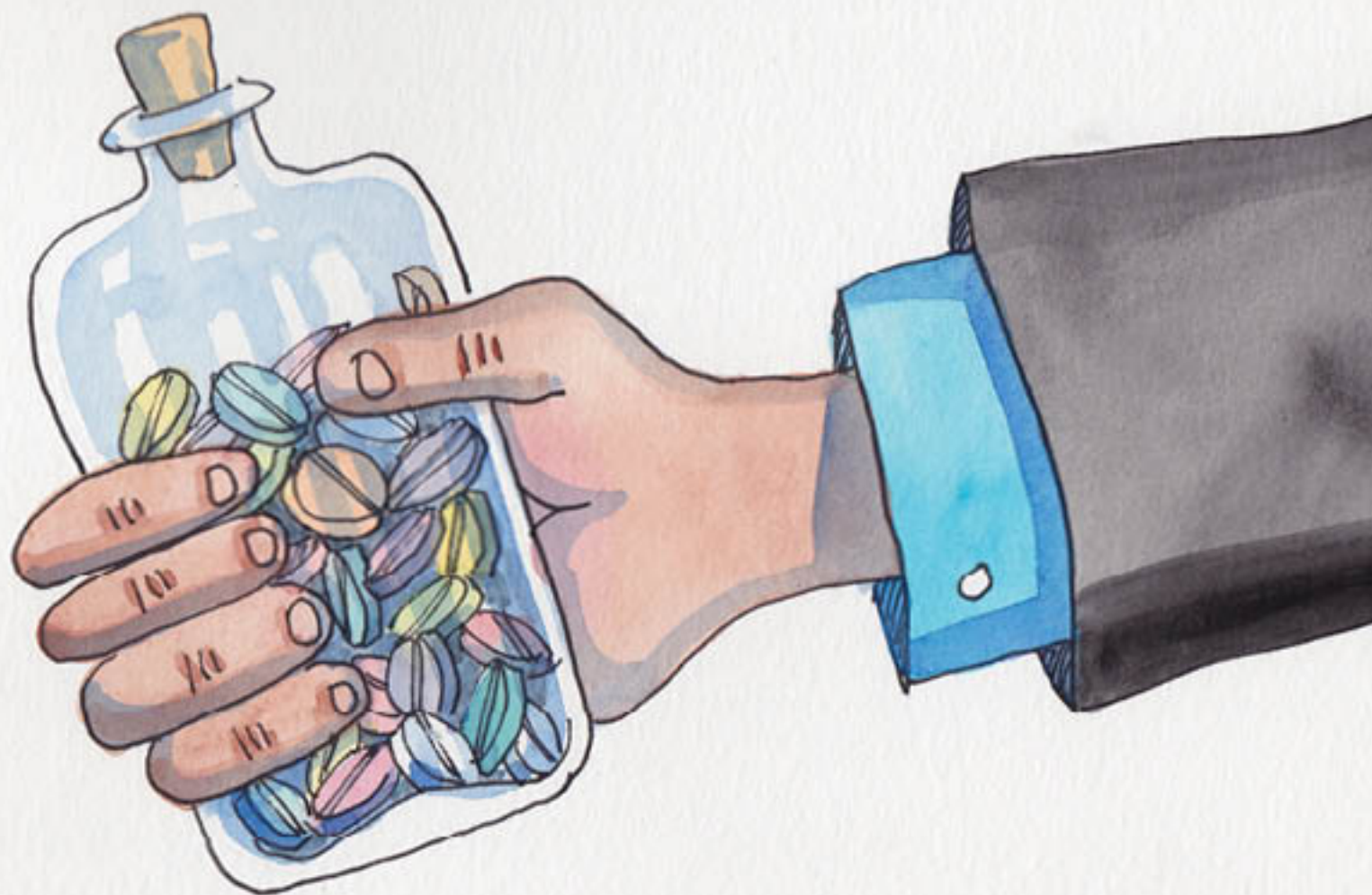
And the old woman settled back down in her chair, muttering about the fools that surrounded her.



Back at the thief's bedside, the medic pulled himself to his full height and made him promise never to steal again.

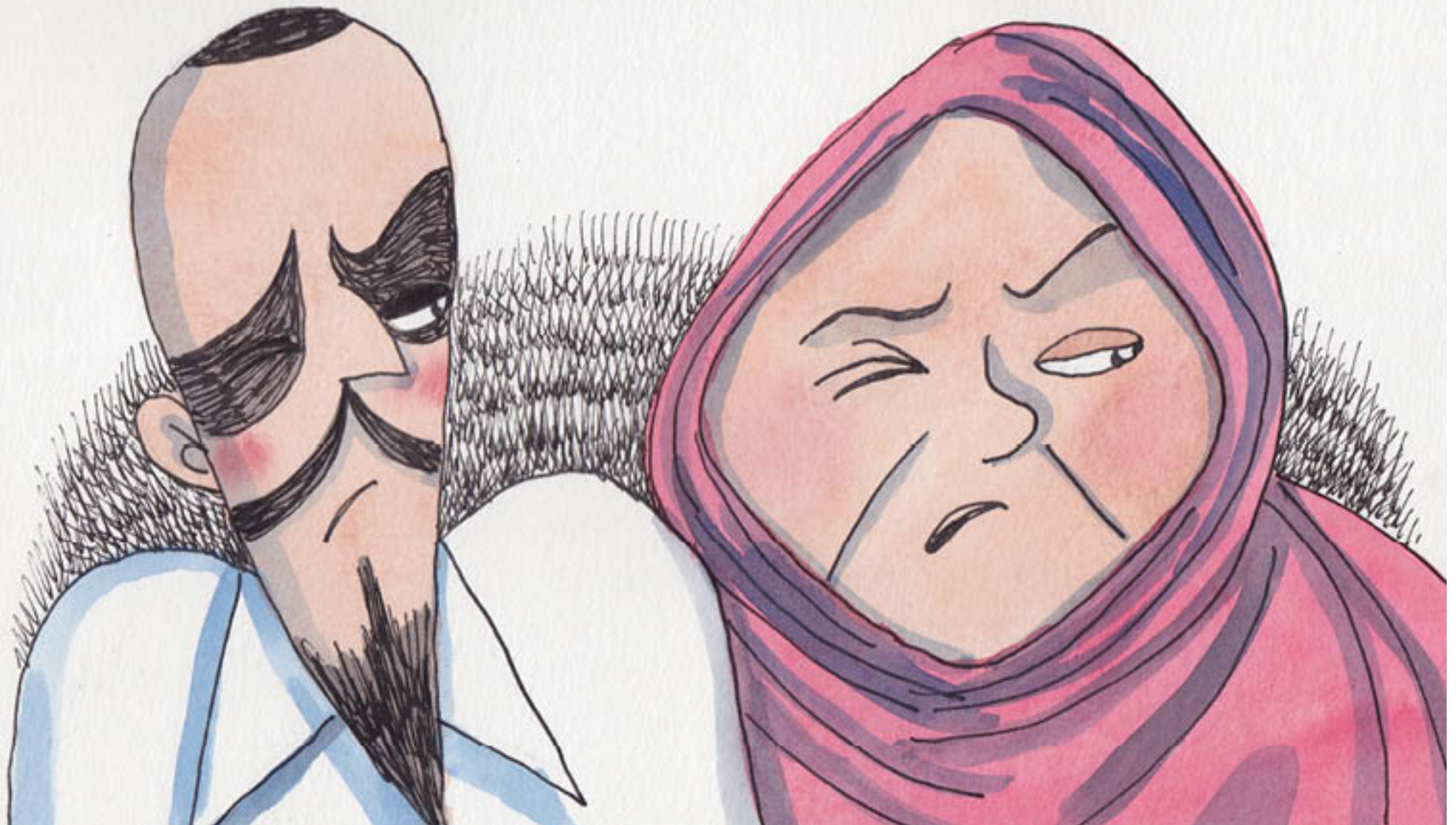


'After a great deal of research into your alarming case, I am prescribing this powerful medicine, which will keep you Dib Dib-free.' he lectured.



'But the second that you are tempted to take what doesn't belong to you,
the horrible Dib Dib will immediately strike you down once again.

And next time, it will surely prove fatal.'



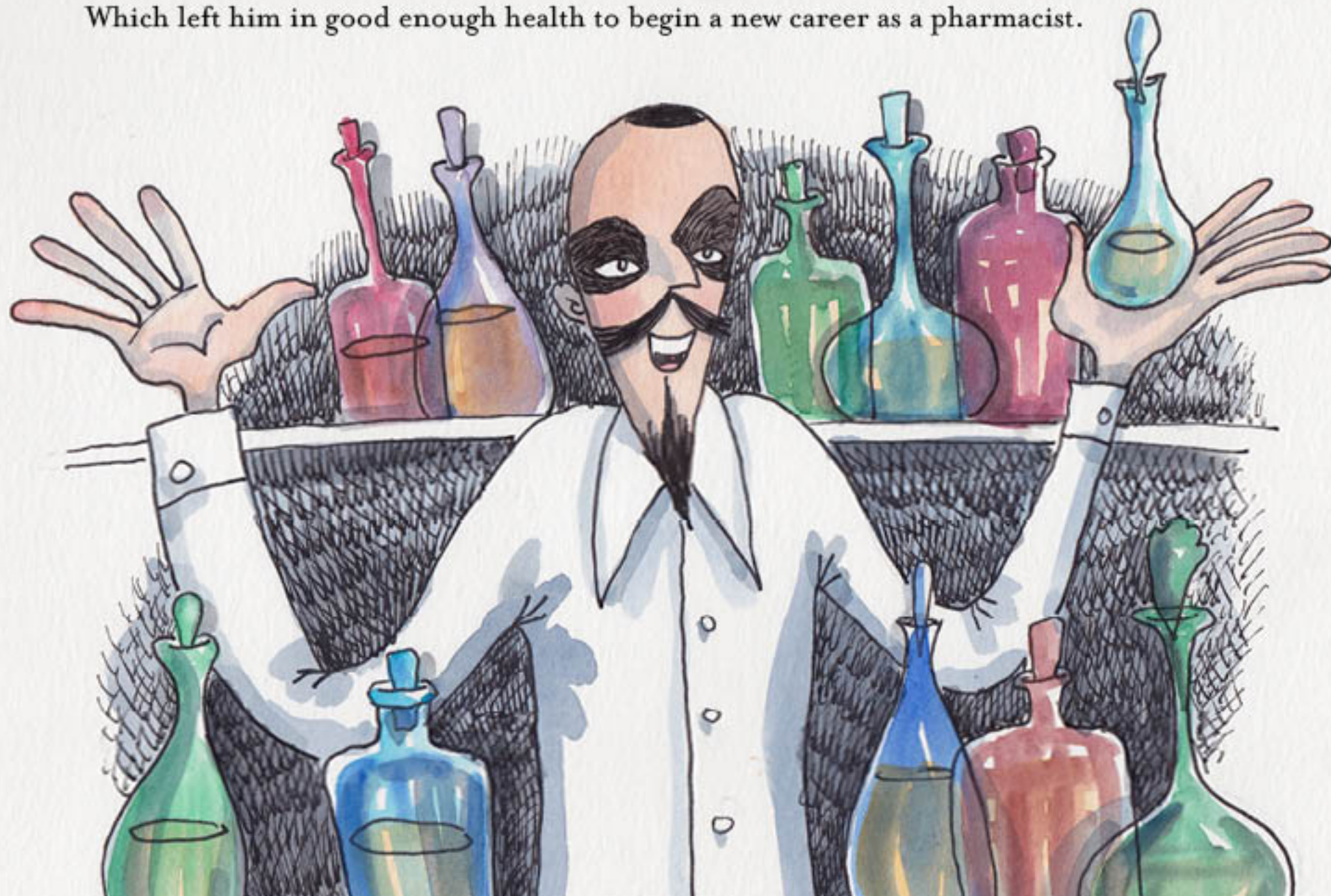
Thanking the doctor profusely, the thief jumped up, instantly cured.



I am happy to say that no matter how tempted he was, he never stole again.

Which meant that the horrible Dib Dib never struck him down again.

Which left him in good enough health to begin a new career as a pharmacist.





And the old woman went back to shouting at the dripping tap in the corner of her room.
Because although the doctor had offered to fix it, she had declined.



Secretly, the doctor was pleased that the tap kept dripping.



Because it reminded him of how, he too had been ... ever so briefly ...





... struck down by the

horrible,

horrible

Dib Dib.

The
End



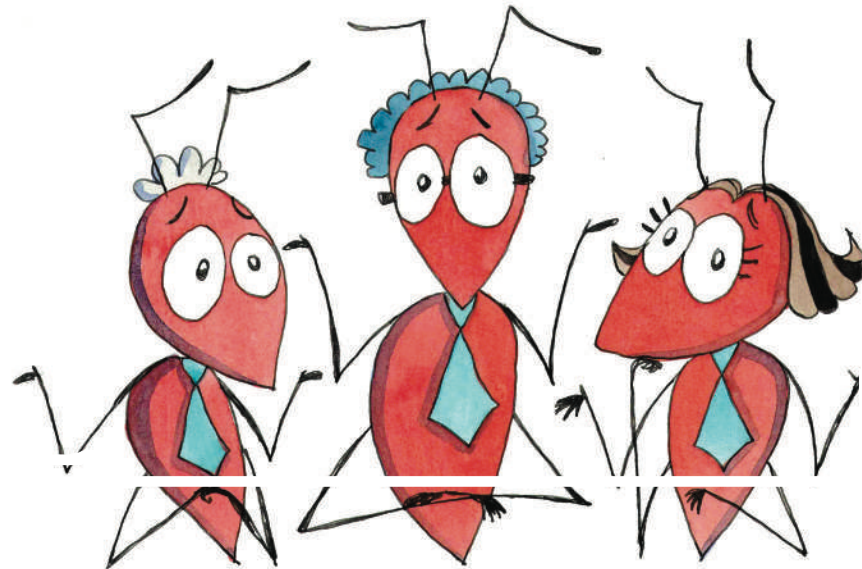




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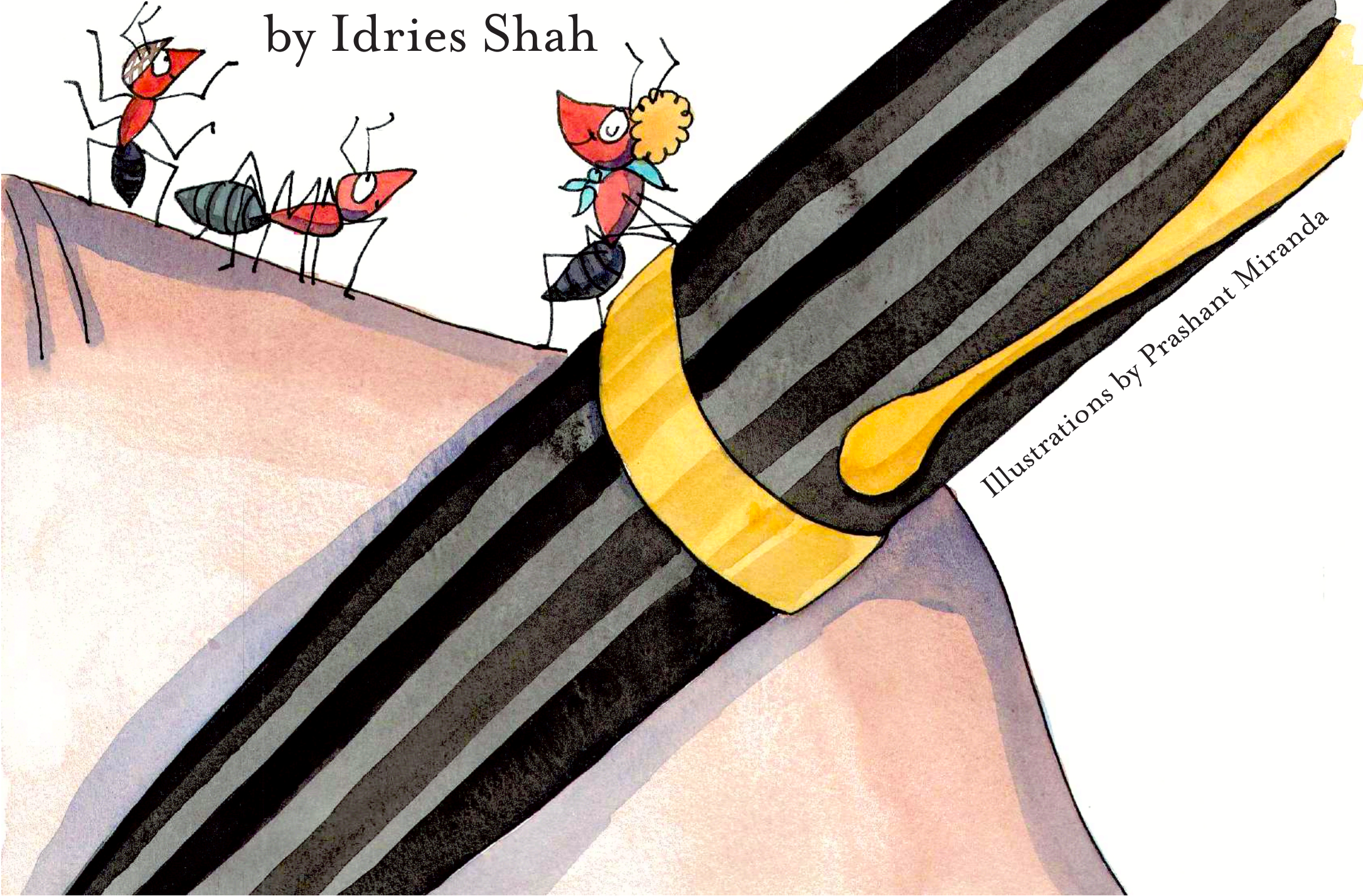


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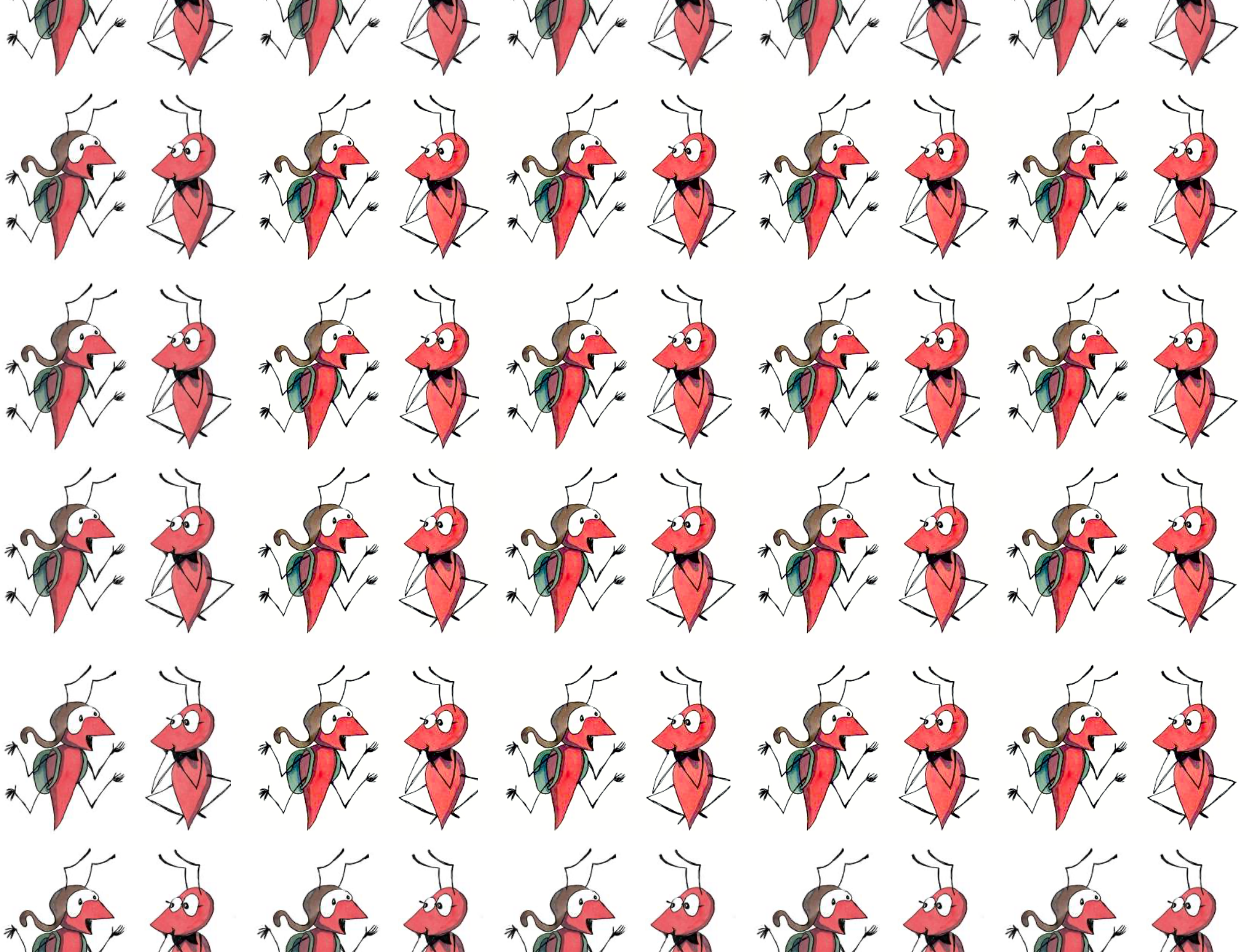
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THE ANTS AND THE PEN
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Illustrations by Prashant Miranda



The Ants and the Pen



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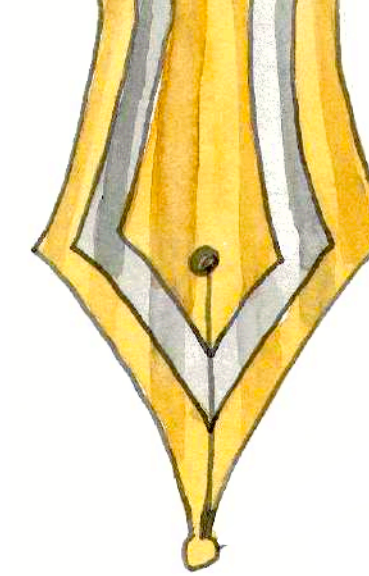
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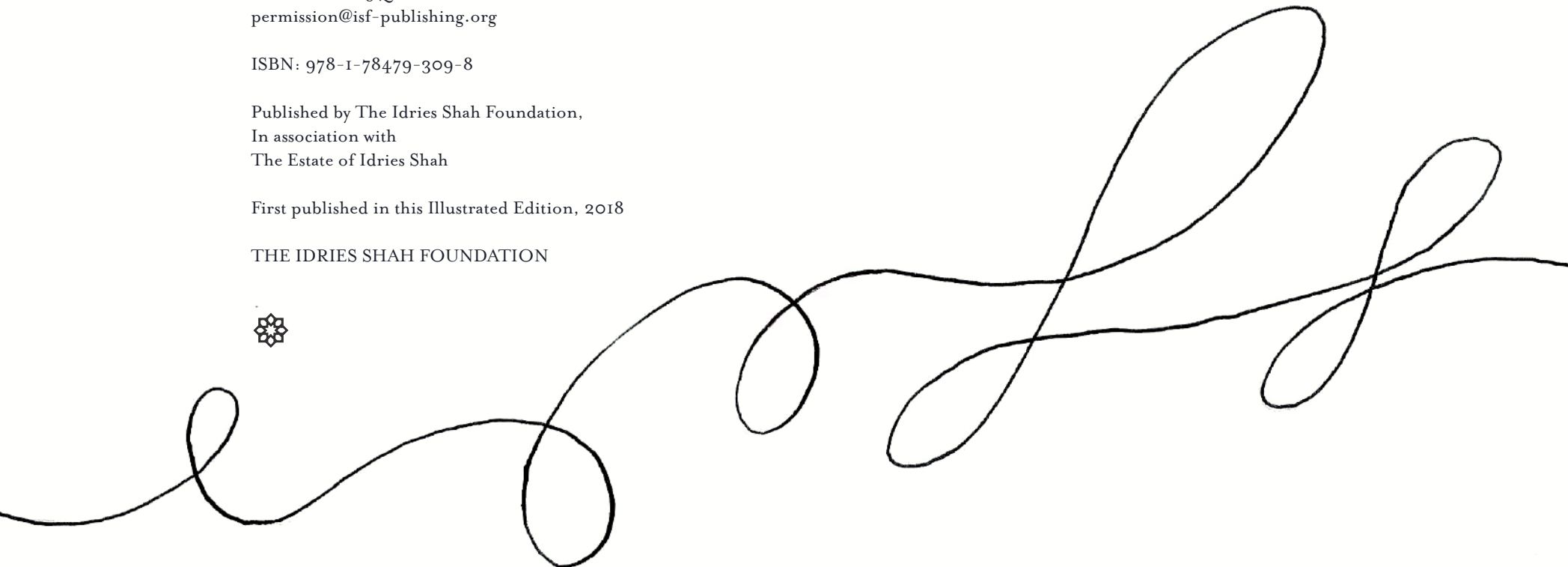
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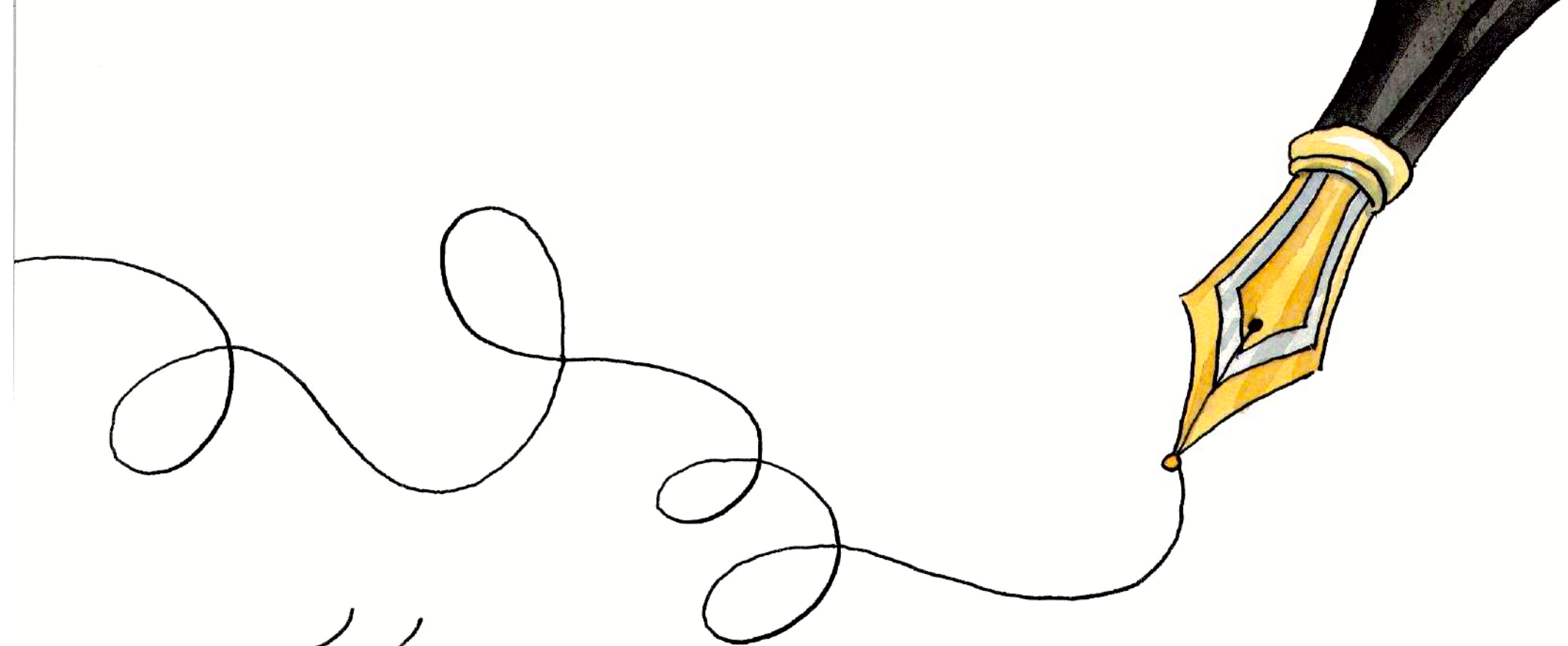
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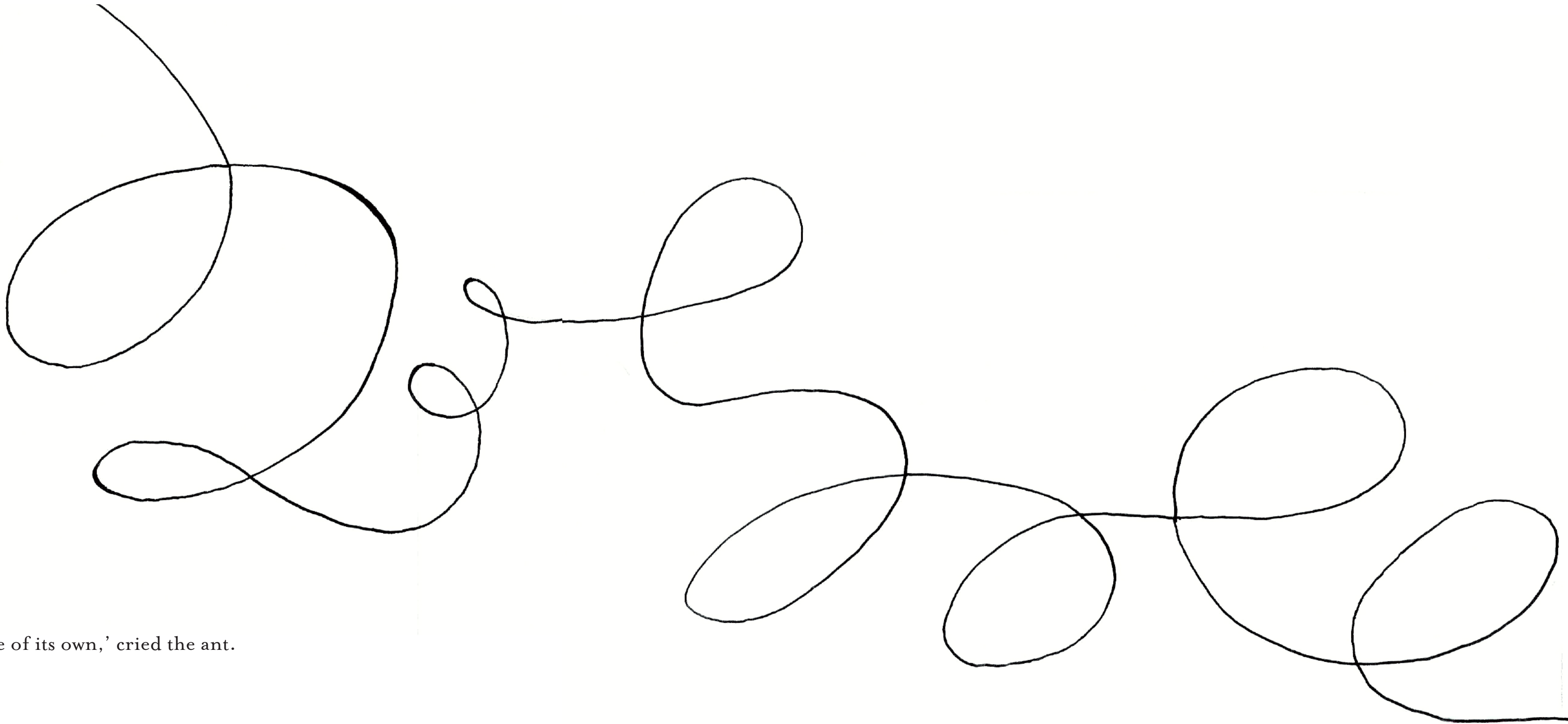
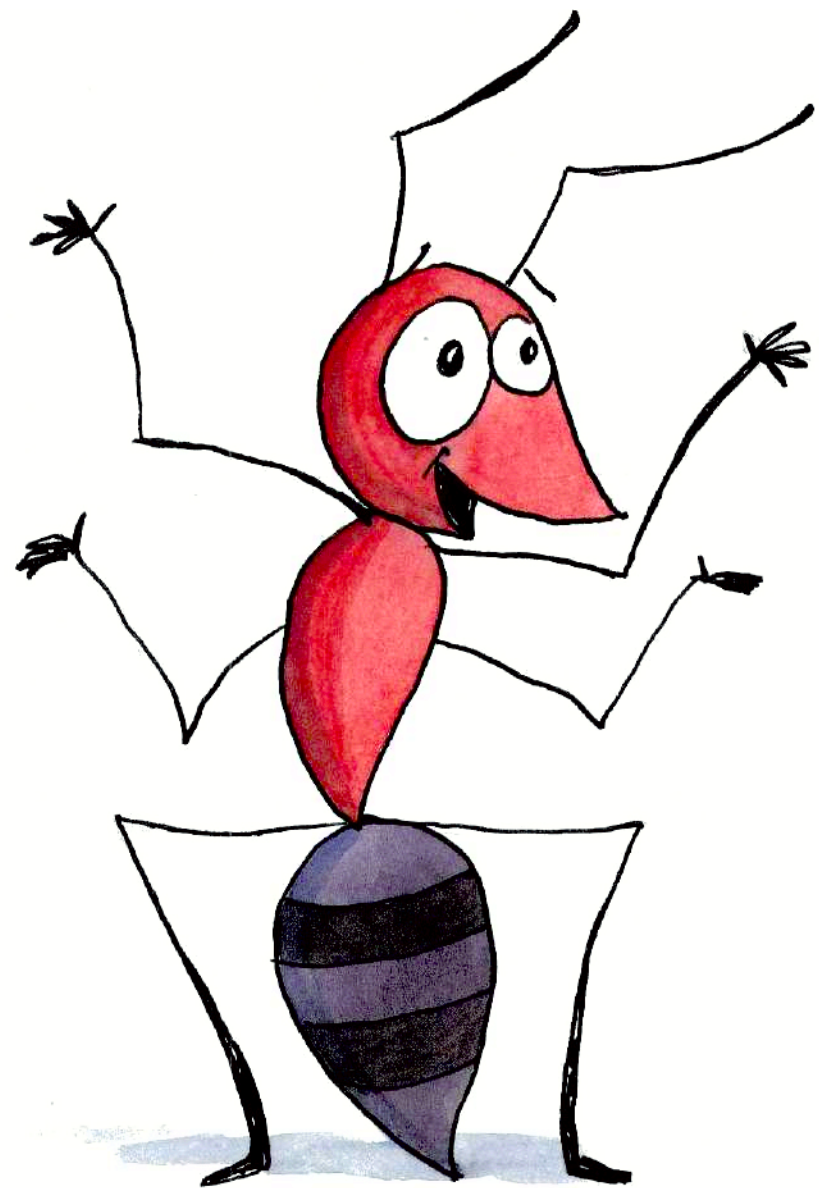


One day a lone ant strayed across a piece of paper



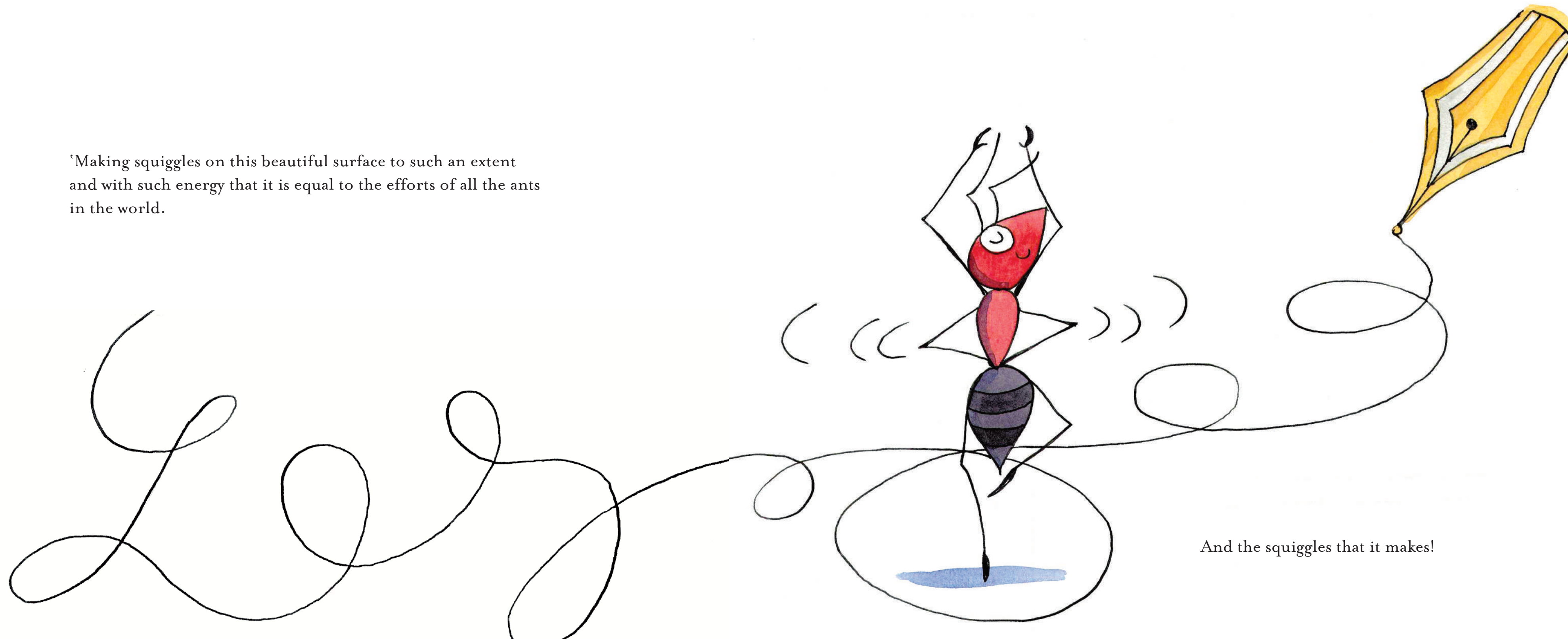
and saw a pen writing in fine, black strokes.



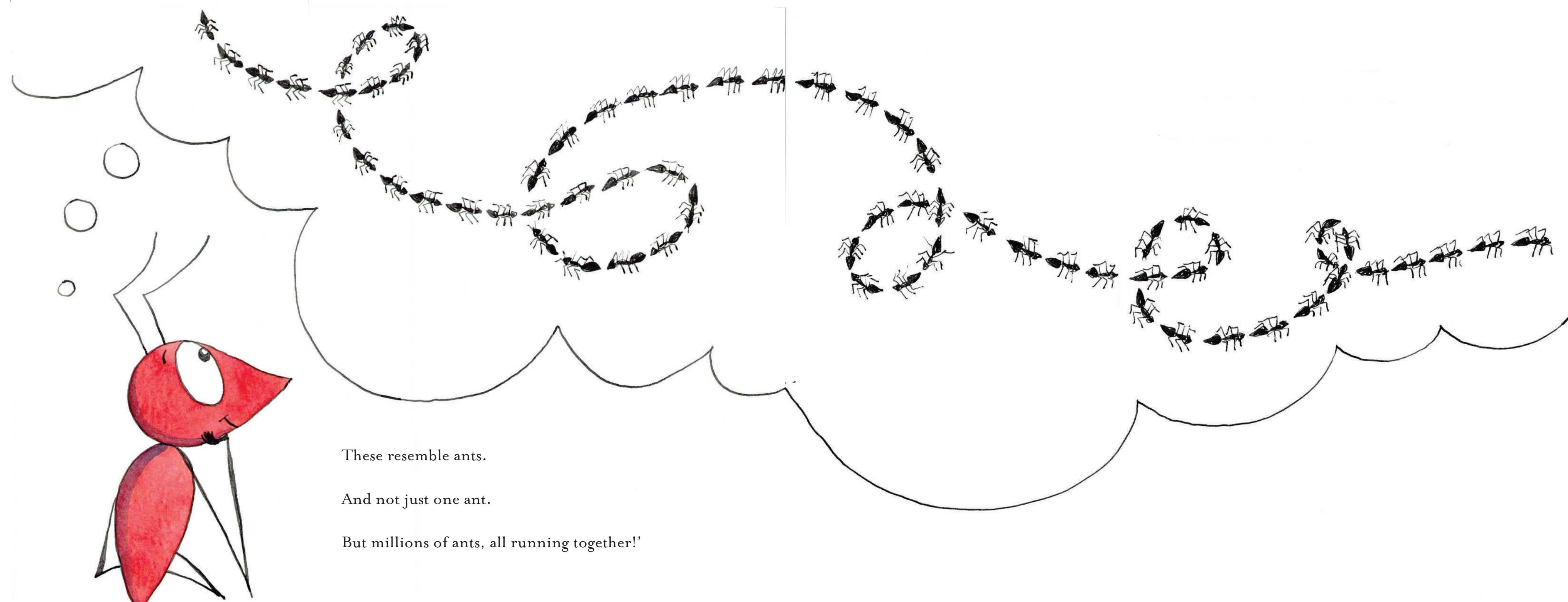


'This remarkable thing, with a life of its own,' cried the ant.

'Making squiggles on this beautiful surface to such an extent
and with such energy that it is equal to the efforts of all the ants
in the world.



And the squiggles that it makes!

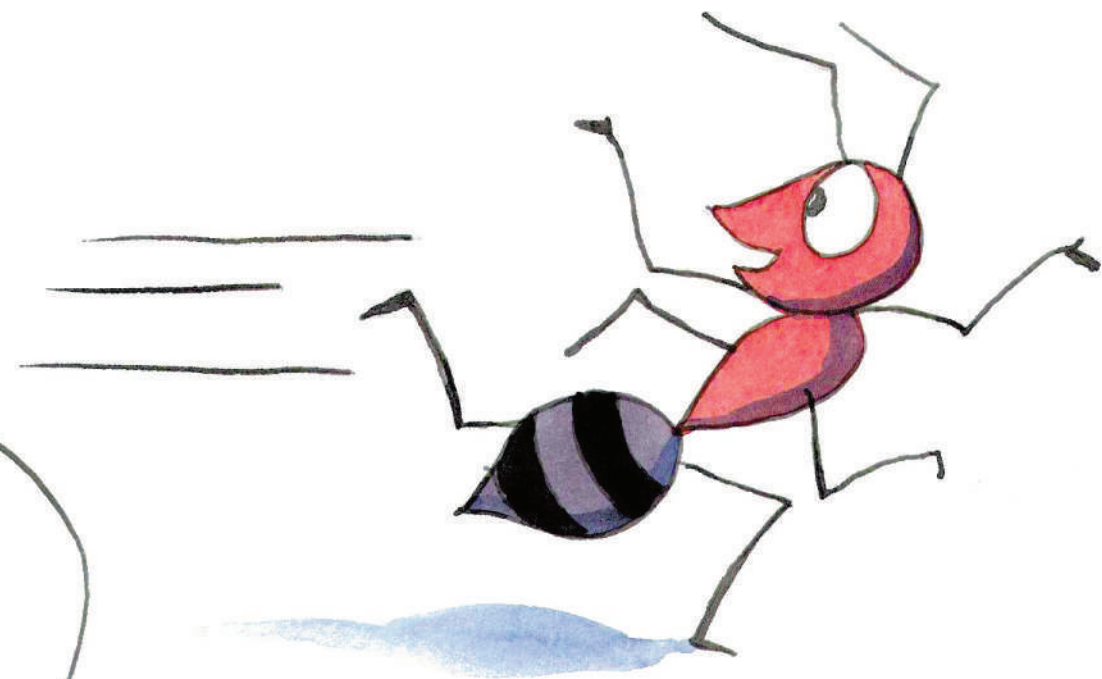


These resemble ants.

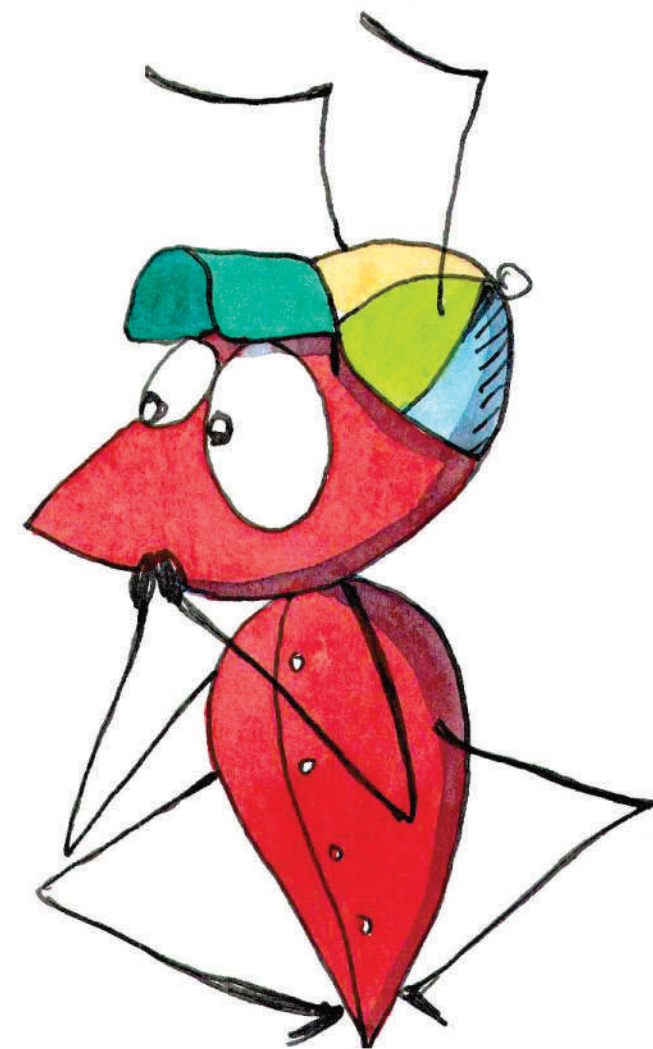
And not just one ant.

But millions of ants, all running together!

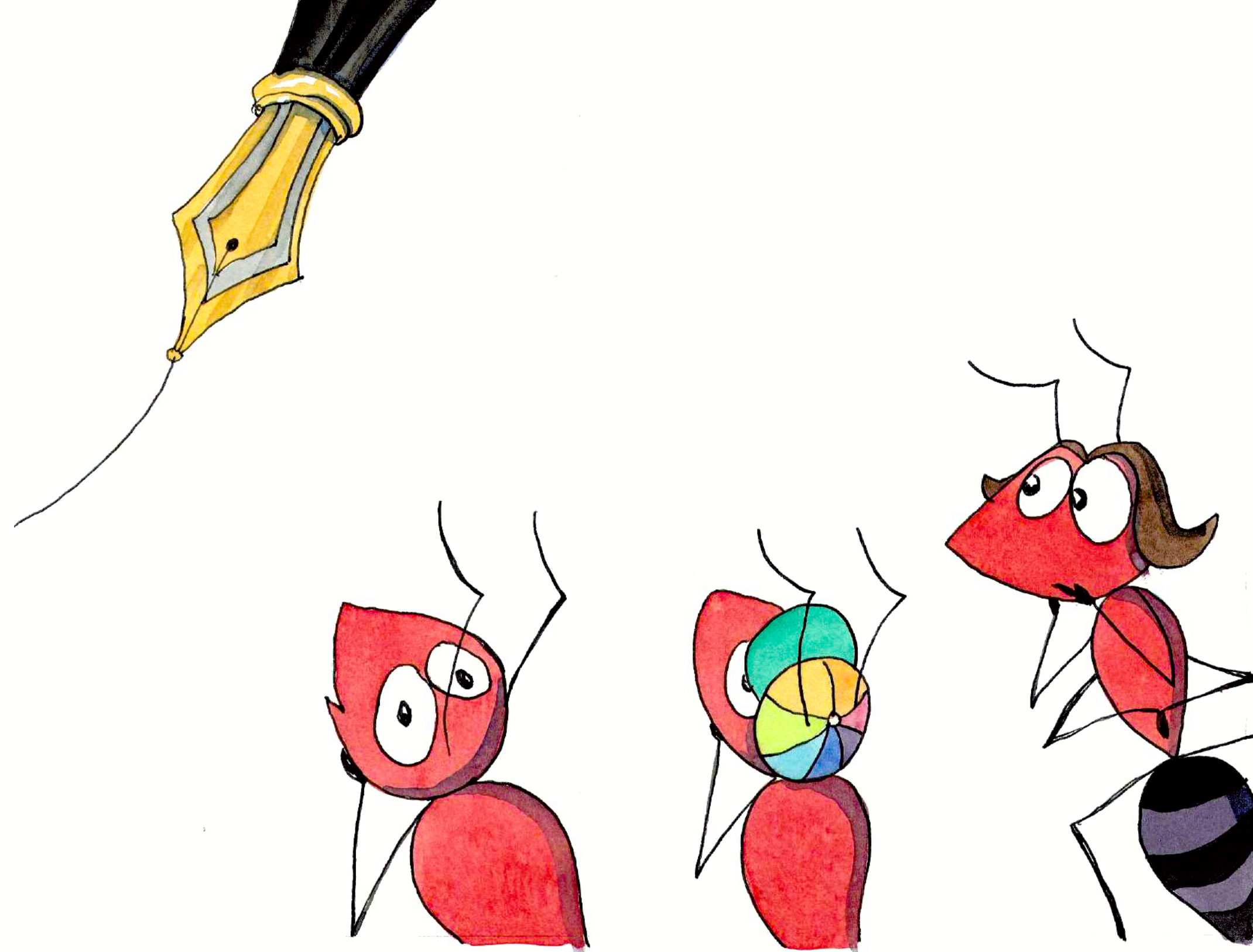
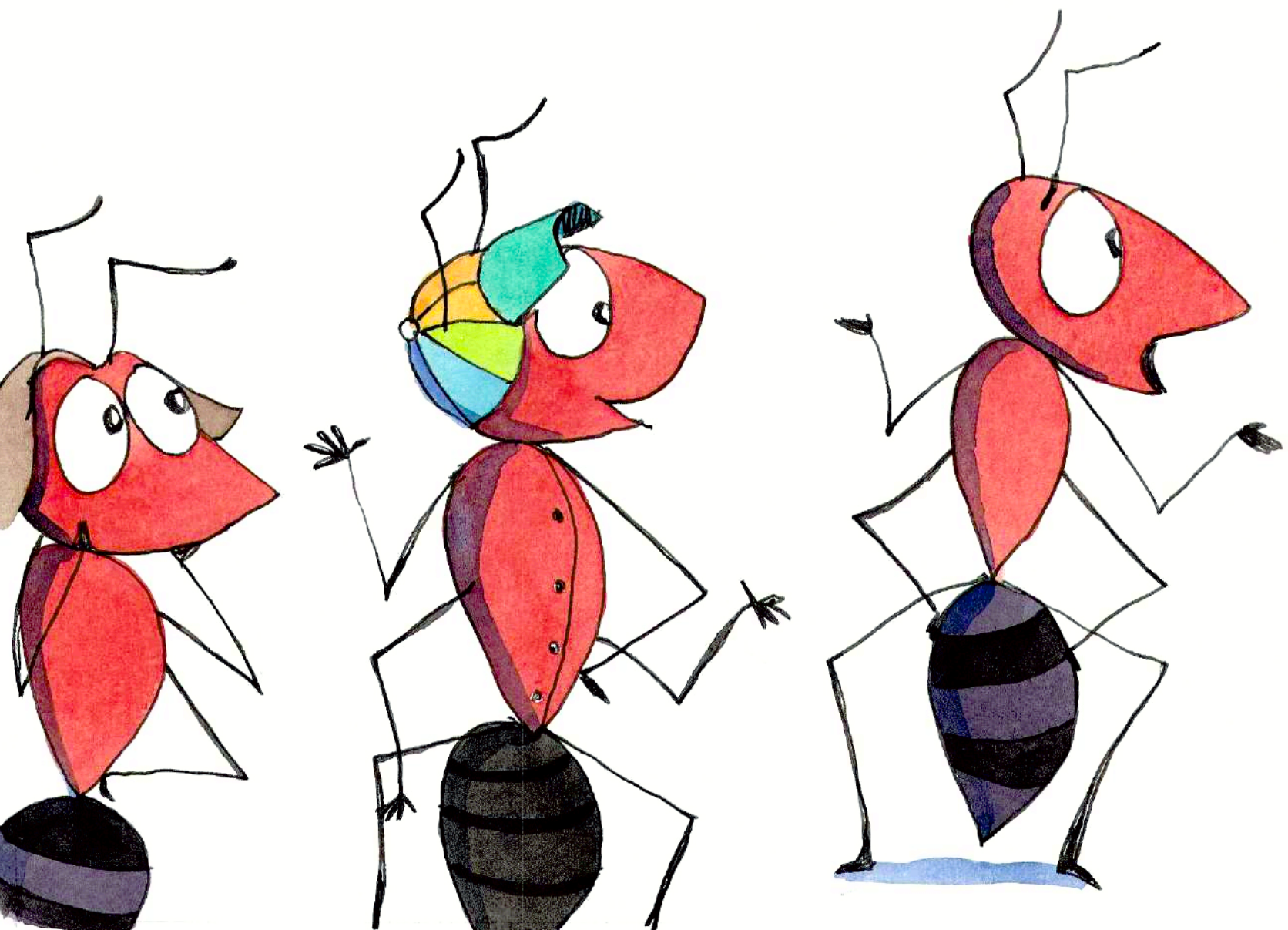
And the little ant was so excited that he rushed off to spread the news,



passing on his ideas to the first ant that he saw.



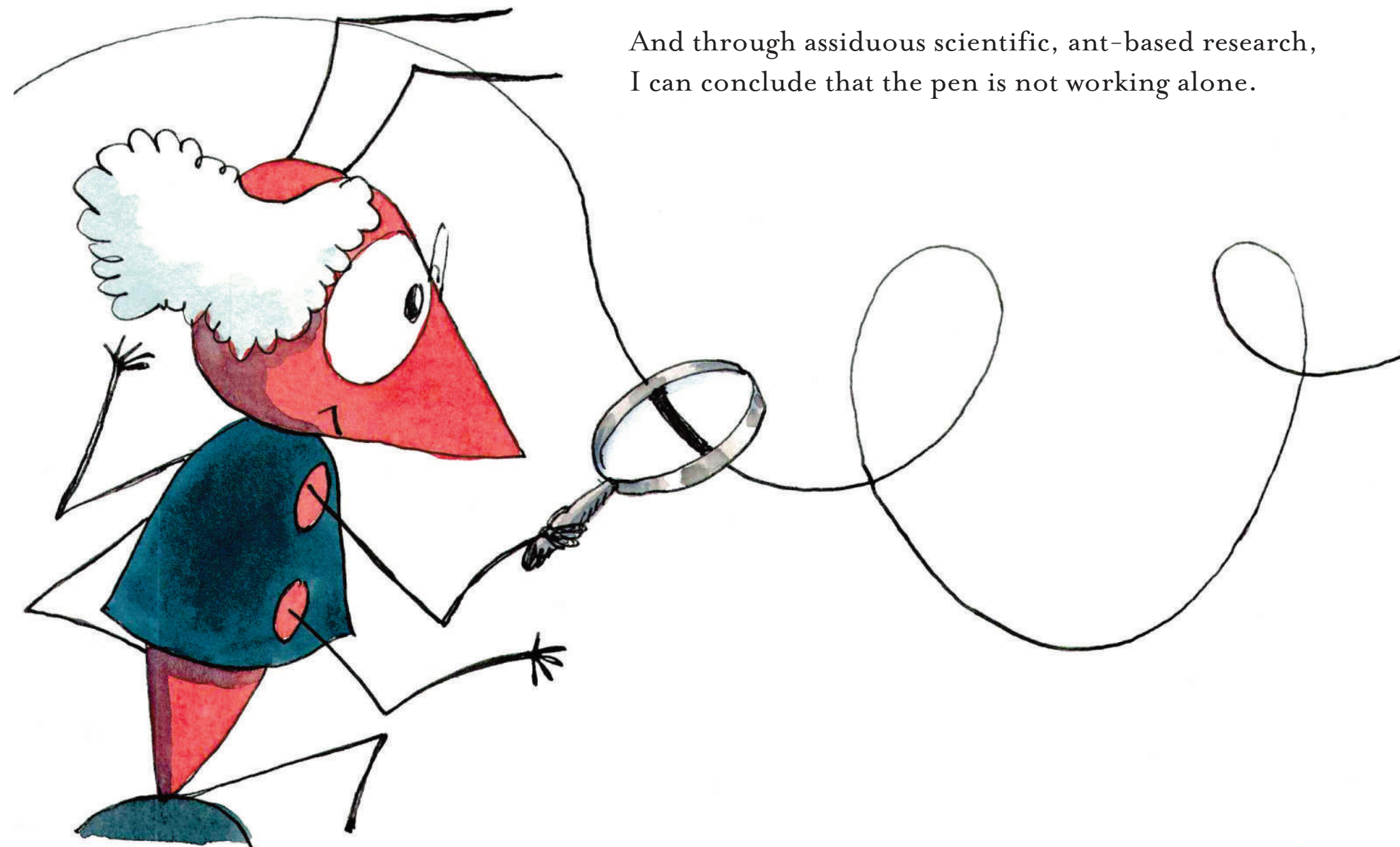
This second ant was just as thrilled by the squiggles and congratulated the bearer of the news for his discovery and for his powers of observation.





But a third ant wasn't so impressed, saying:

'I am afraid that you have allowed your emotions to run away with you, rather than giving the matter serious scientific ant thought.'



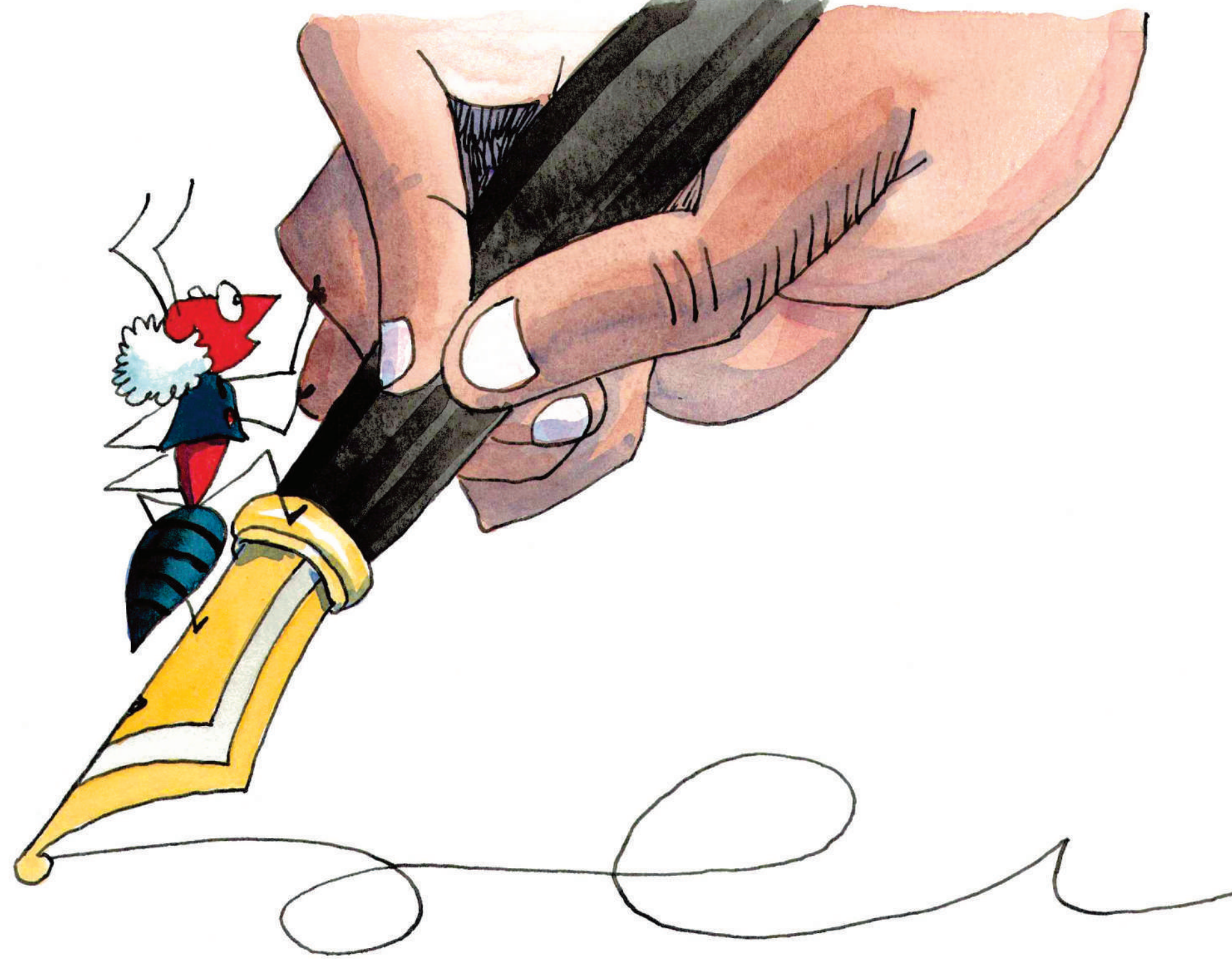
Luckily, now that you've drawn my attention to all these squiggles, I have also been studying the strange object that is making them.

And through assiduous scientific, ant-based research, I can conclude that the pen is not working alone.

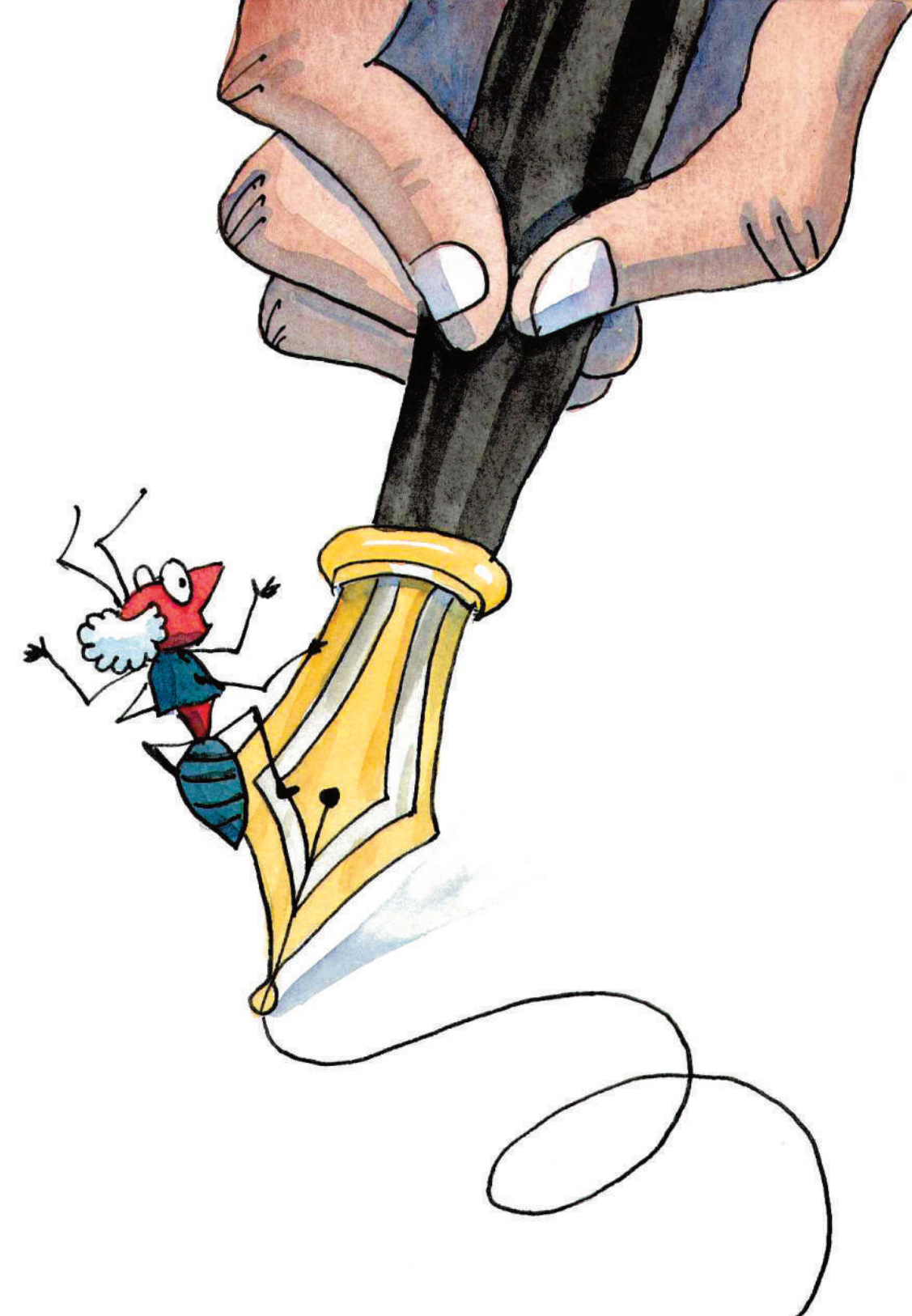
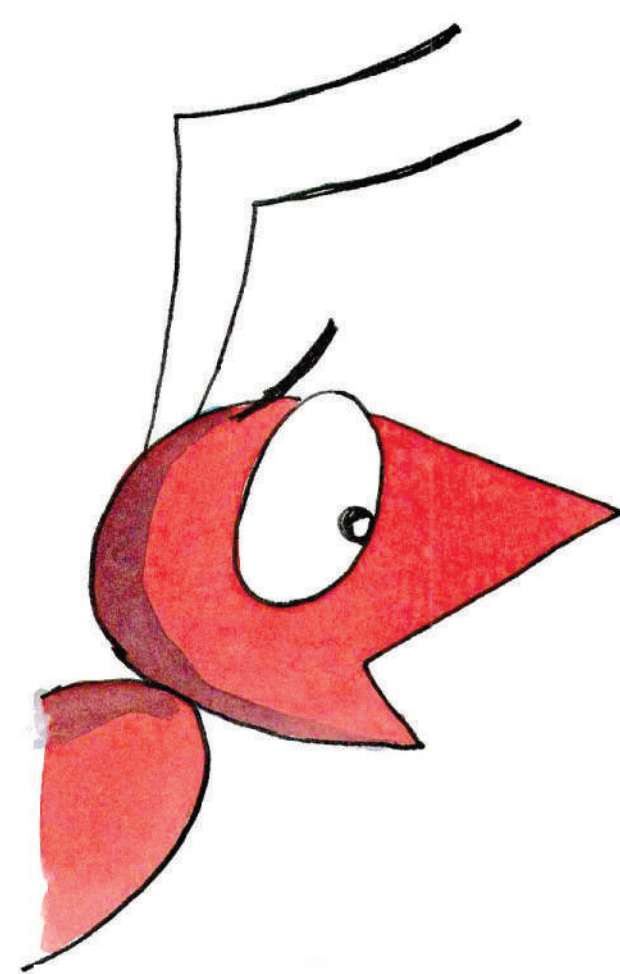
Didn't you notice that the pen is actually attached to
and surrounded by all sorts of other things?



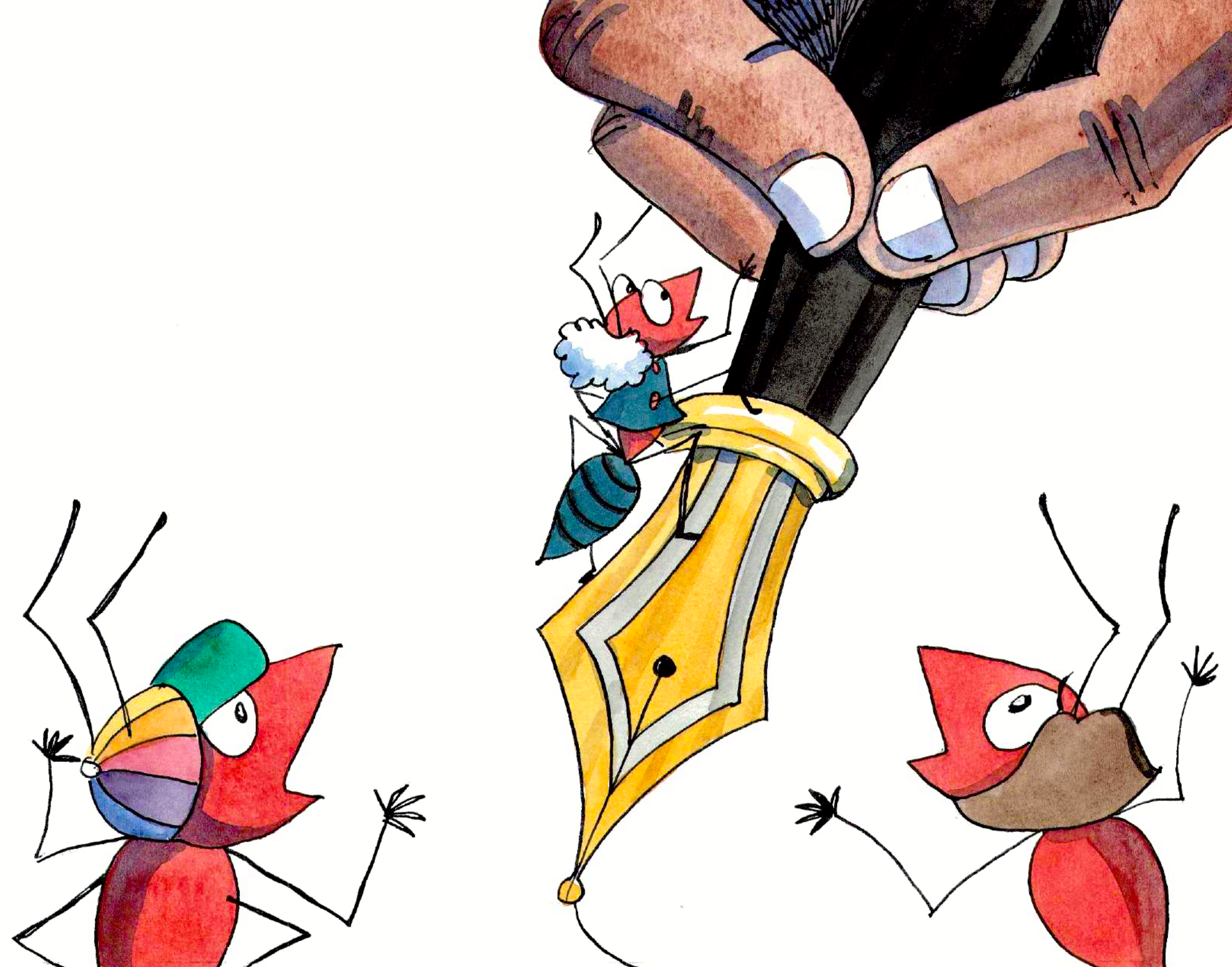
It is my scientific conclusion
that these other objects are powering it.



So whatever is supplying the power is responsible for these squiggles.'



And this is how the group of ants first discovered fingers.



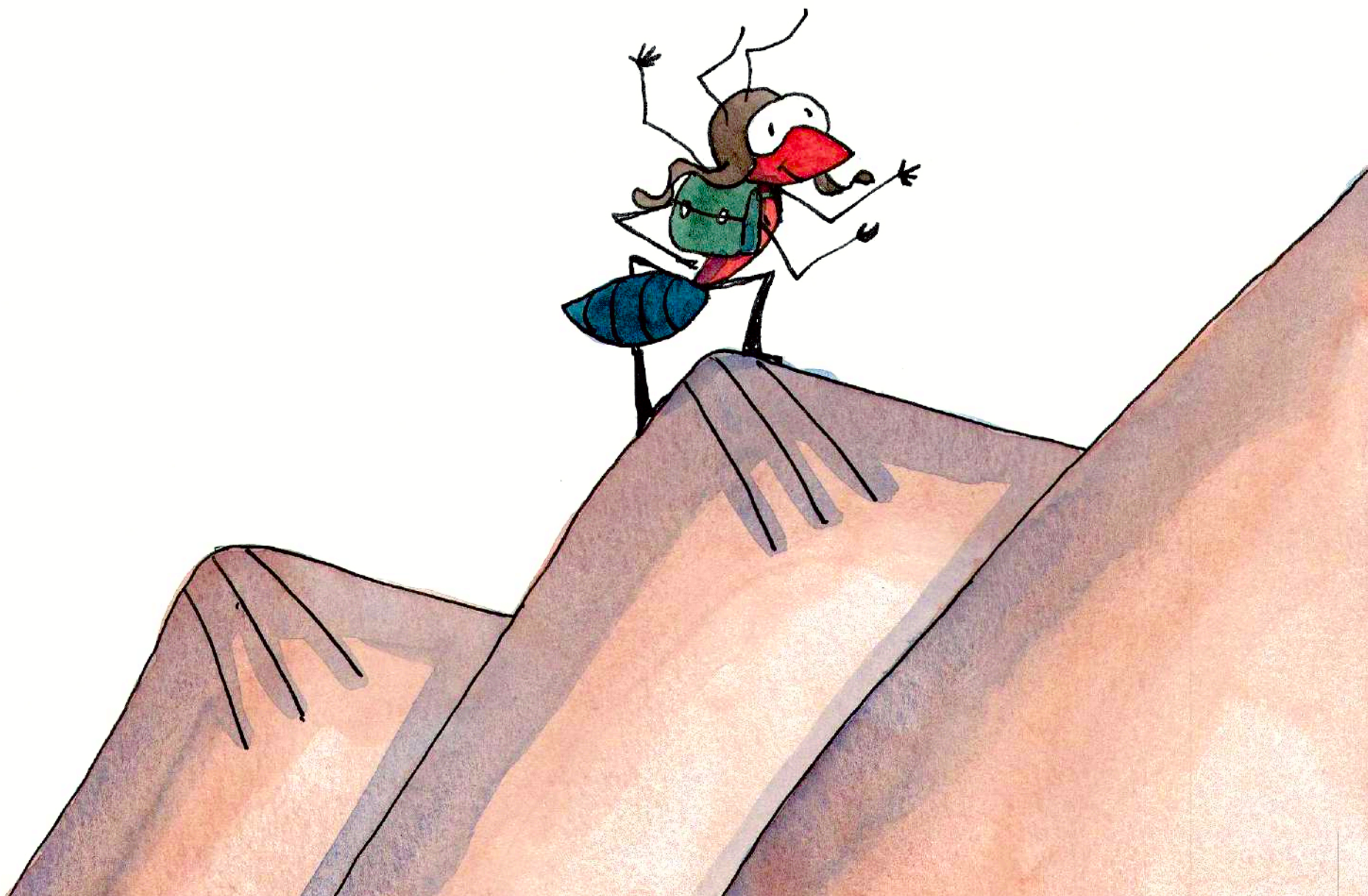


Scientific scrutiny is such that it wasn't long before another ant decided to extend the area of understanding.

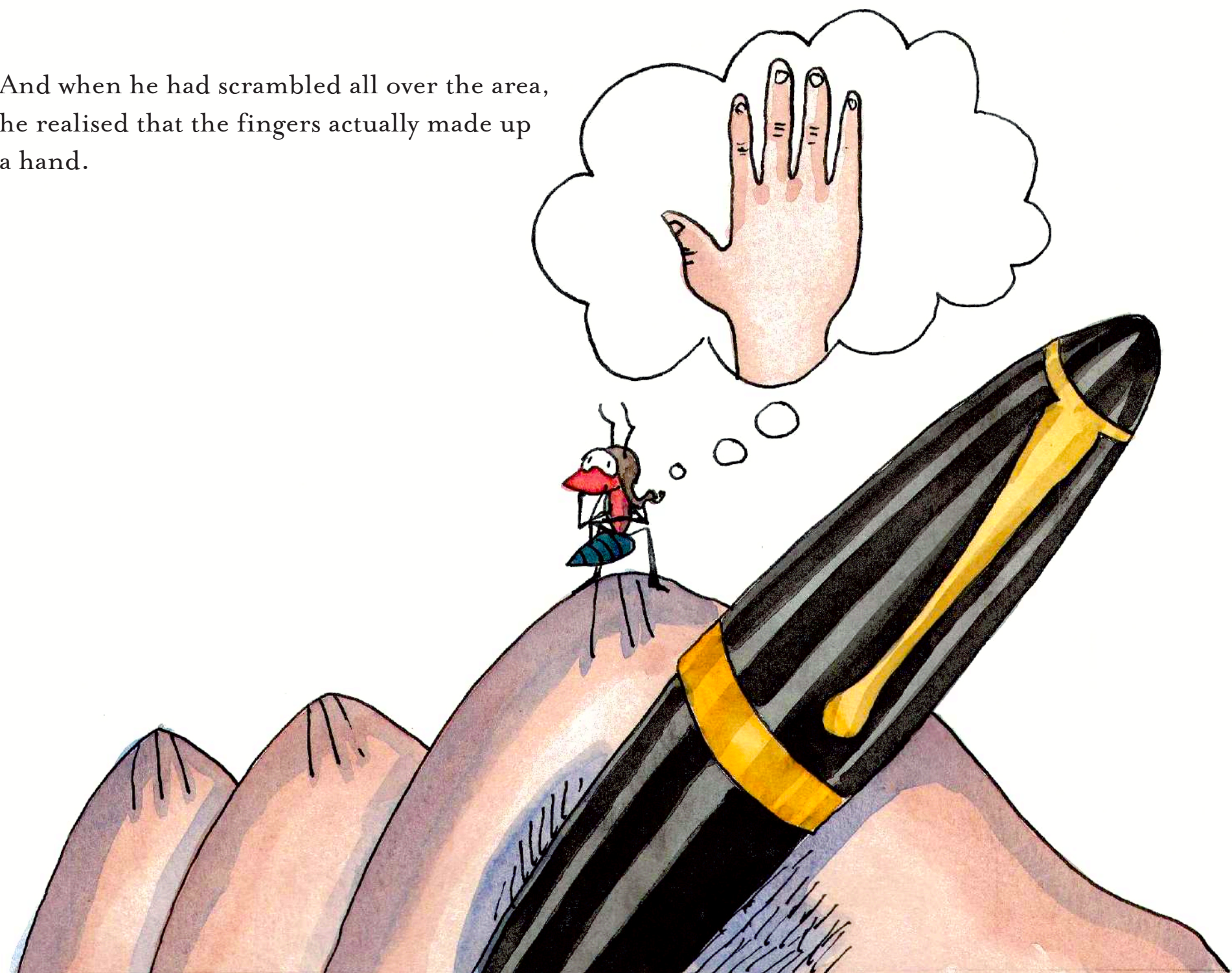
And wanting to explore the fingers further, he scrambled all over them.

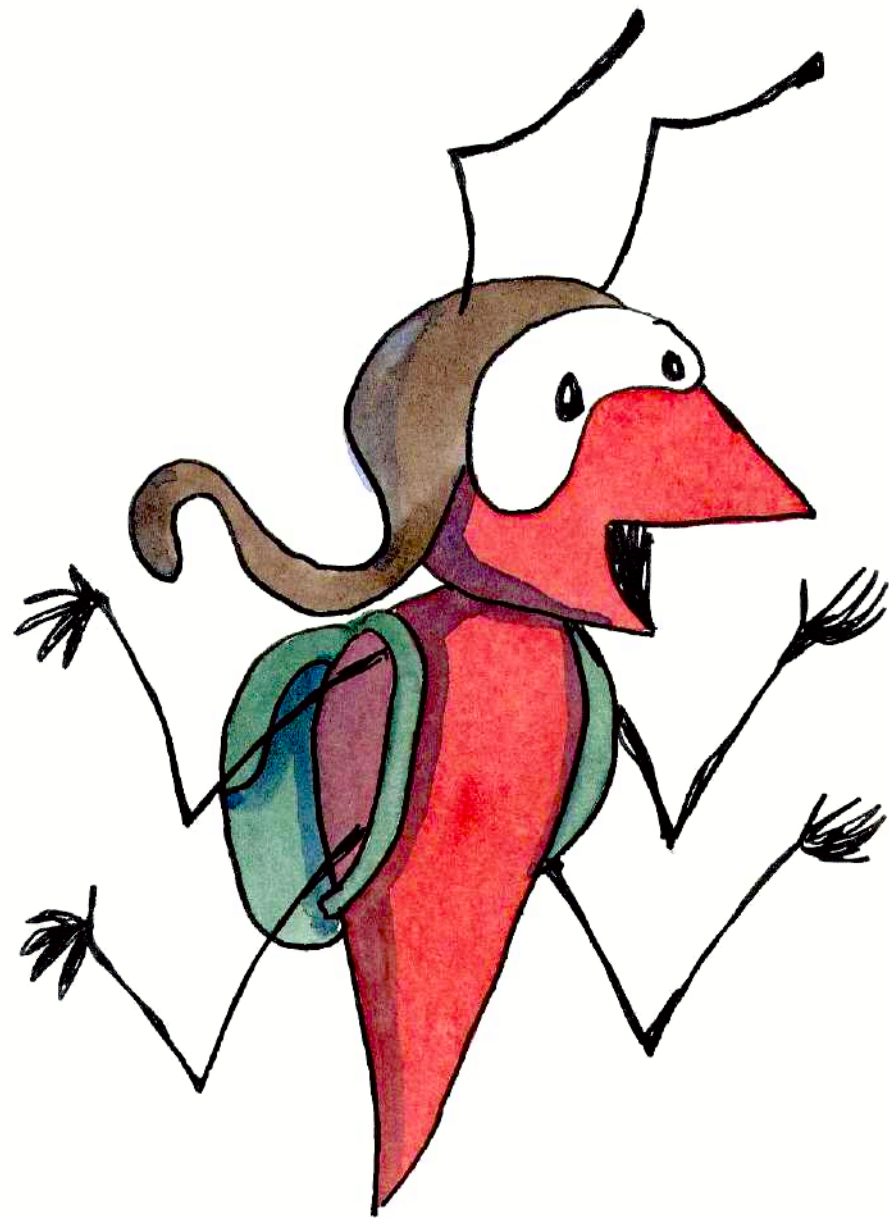


Because this is what exploring ants do.

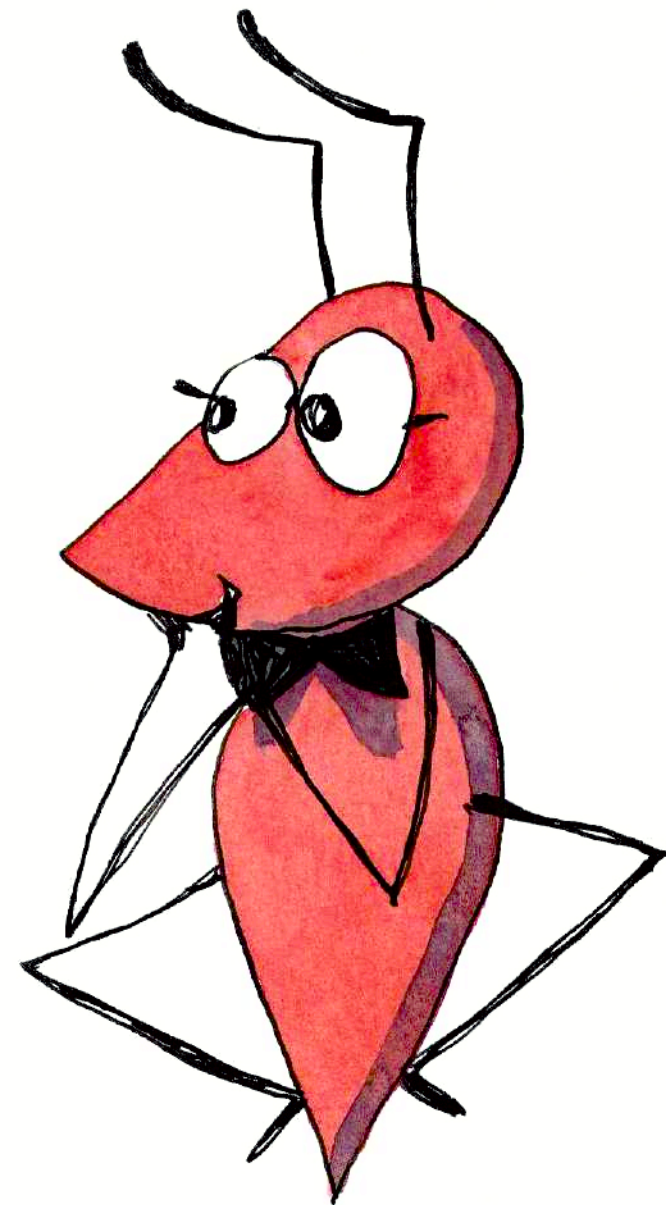


And when he had scrambled all over the area,
he realised that the fingers actually made up
a hand.

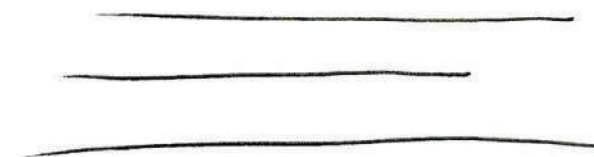




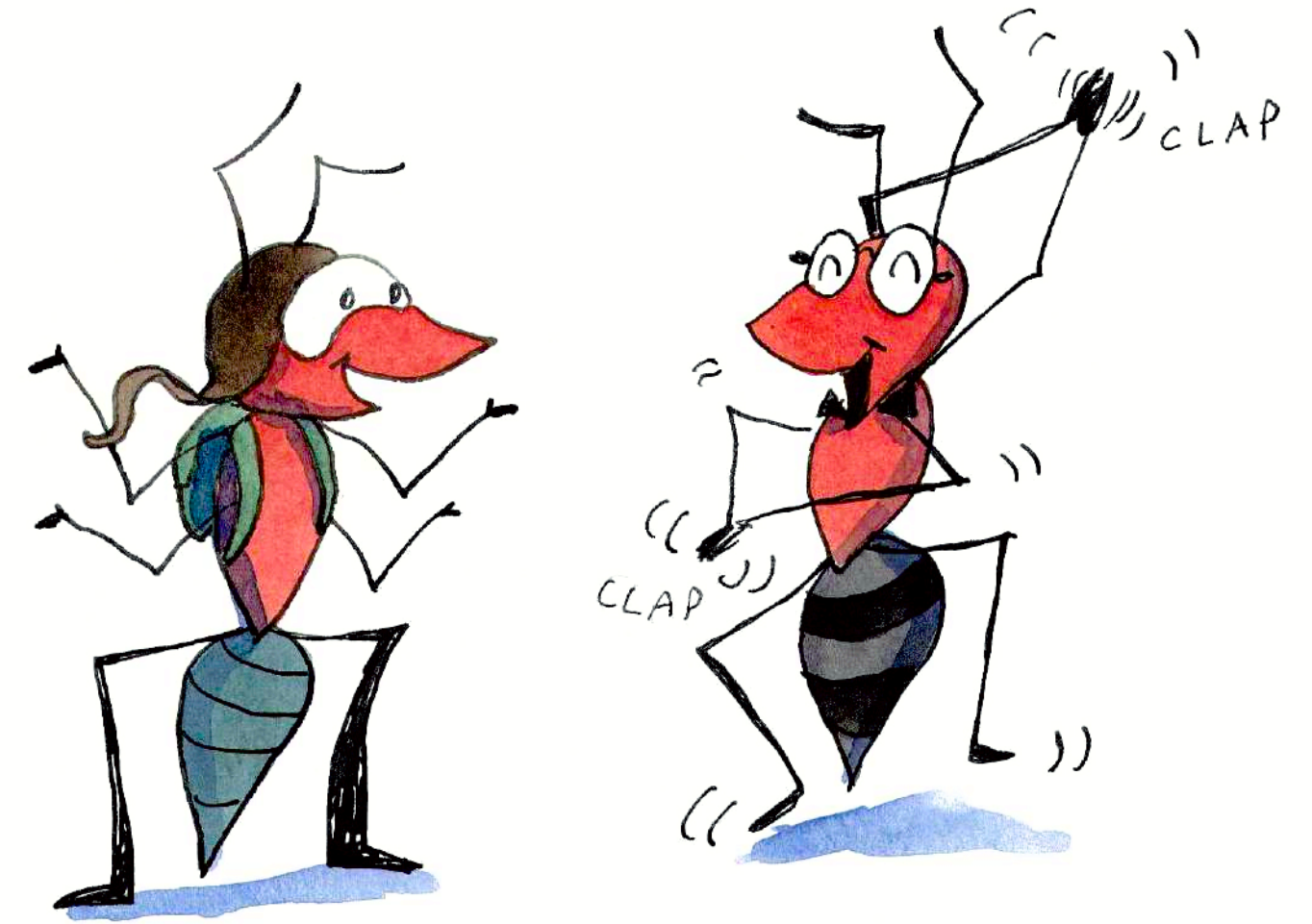
And realising this, he rushed off to spread the news.



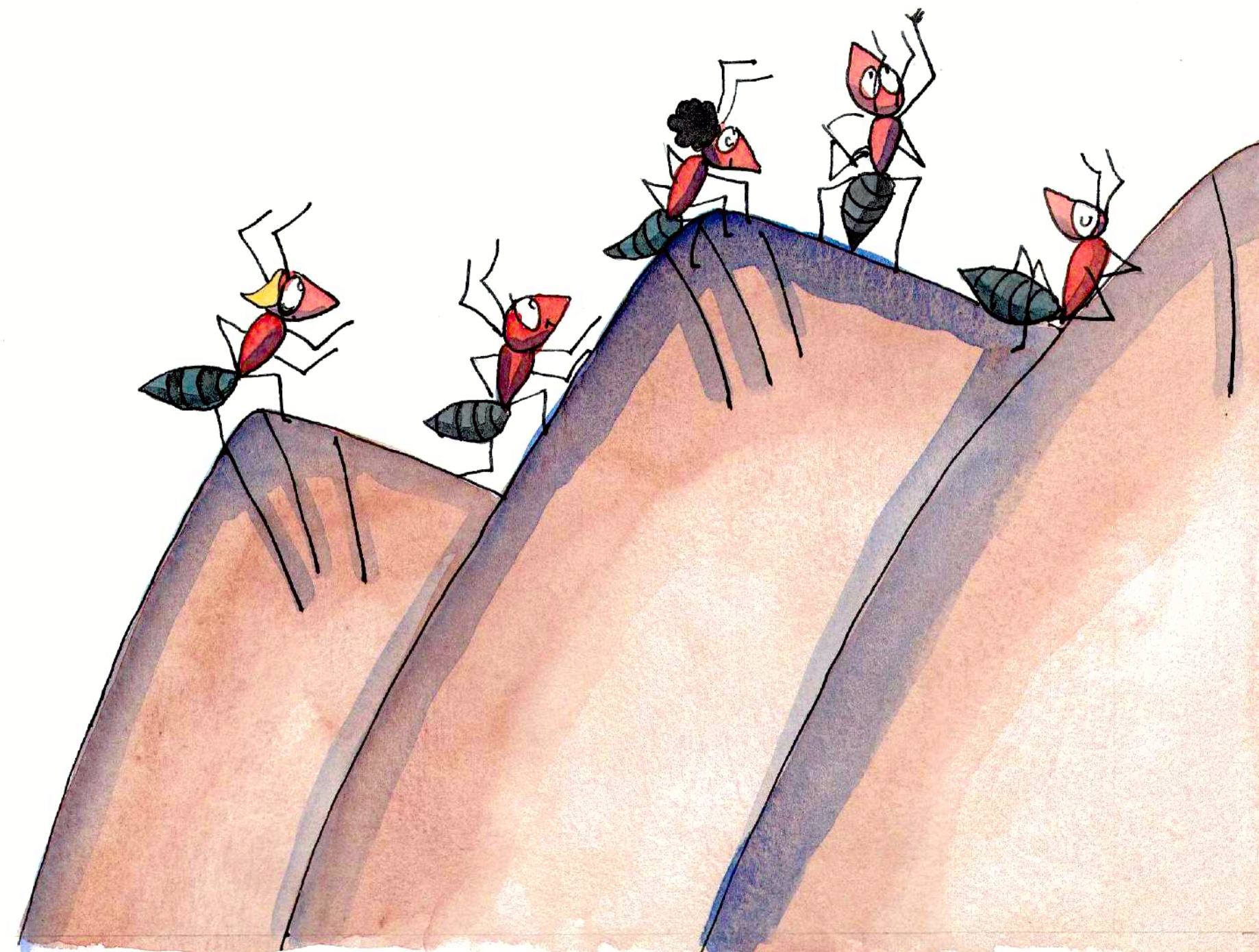
Passing on his ideas
to the first ant that he saw.

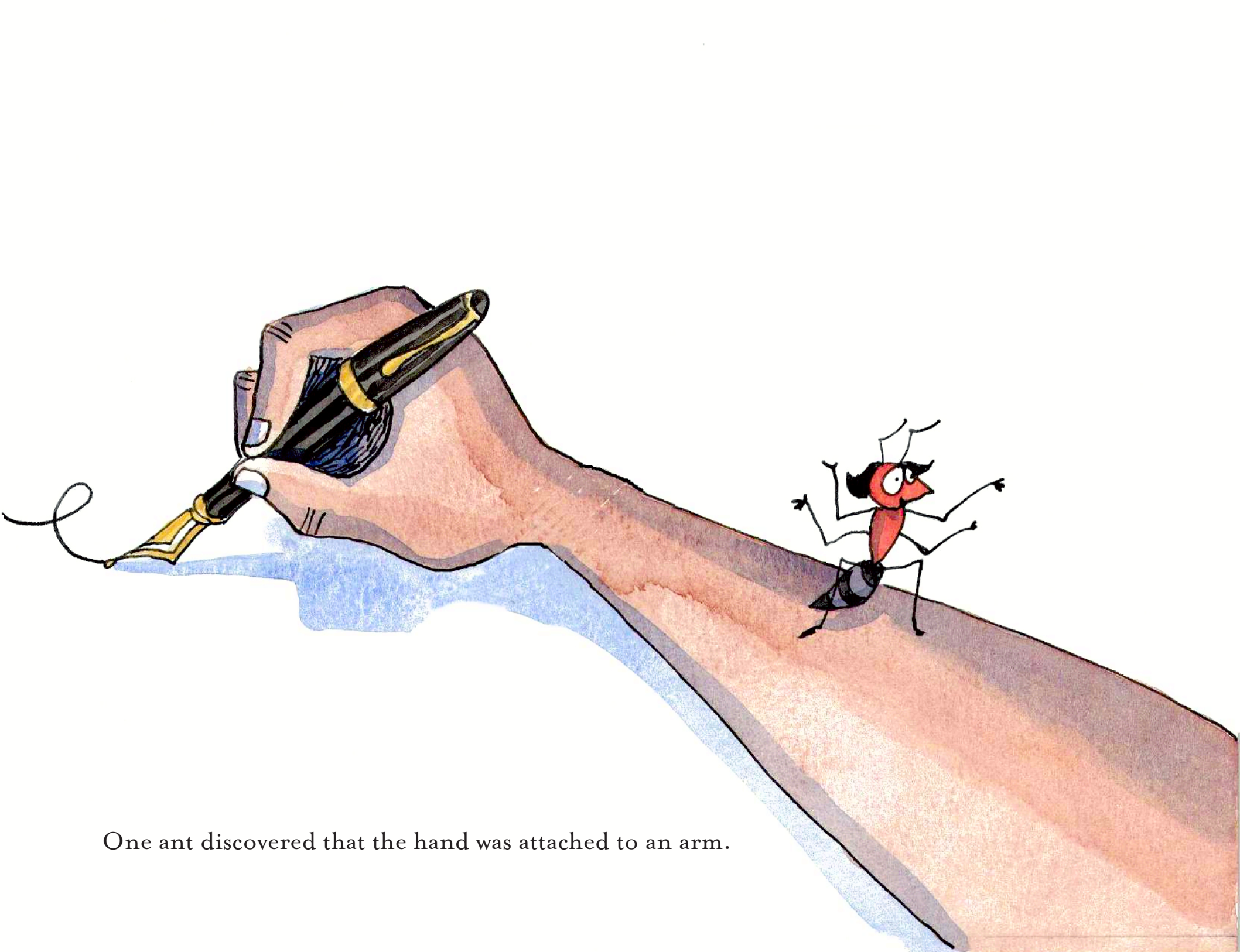


This latest ant was equally thrilled by the description of the hand, and congratulated the bearer of the news for his discovery and for his powers of ant observation.

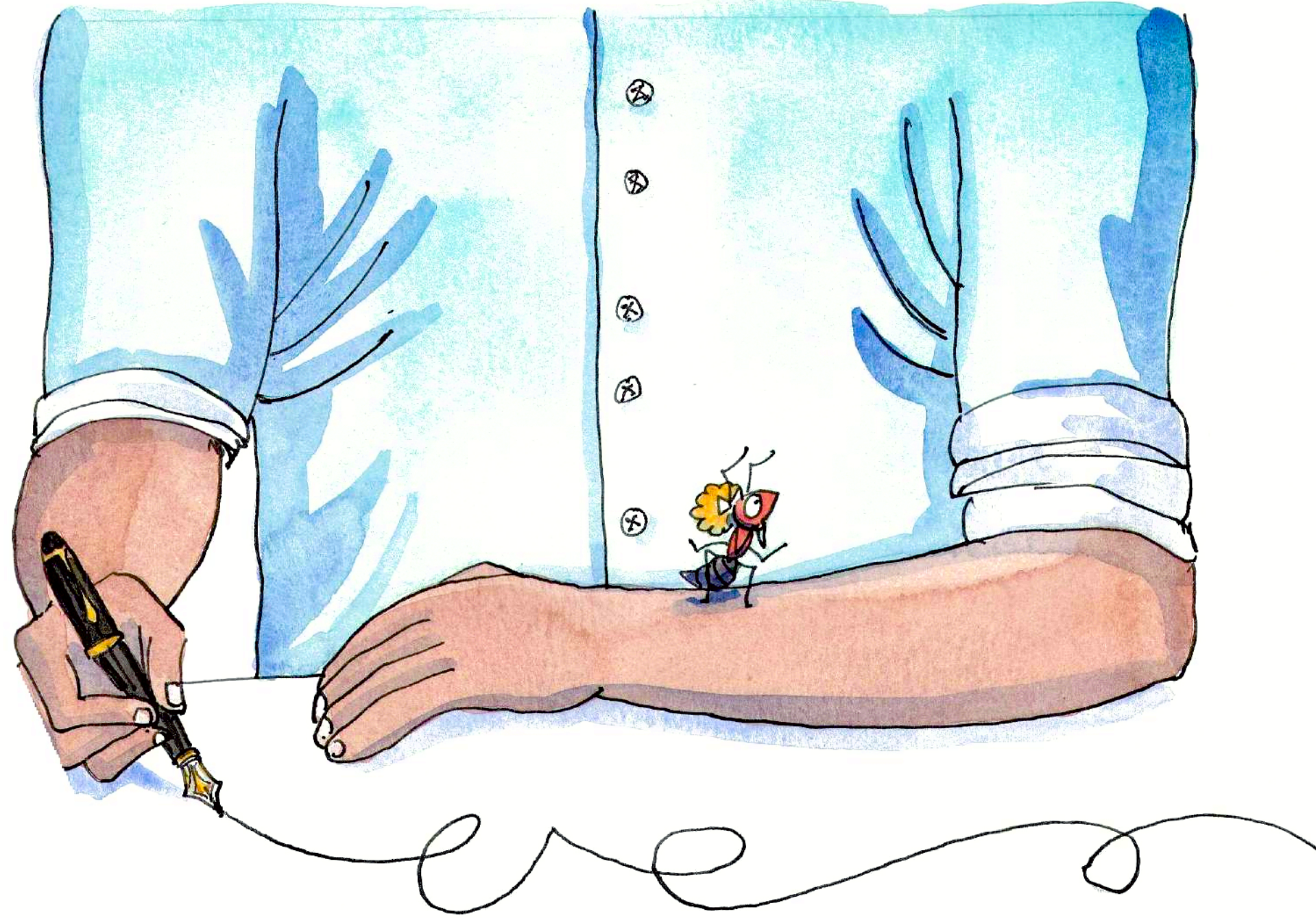


As time went by, ant after ant set out to extend the boundaries of the ants' understanding.

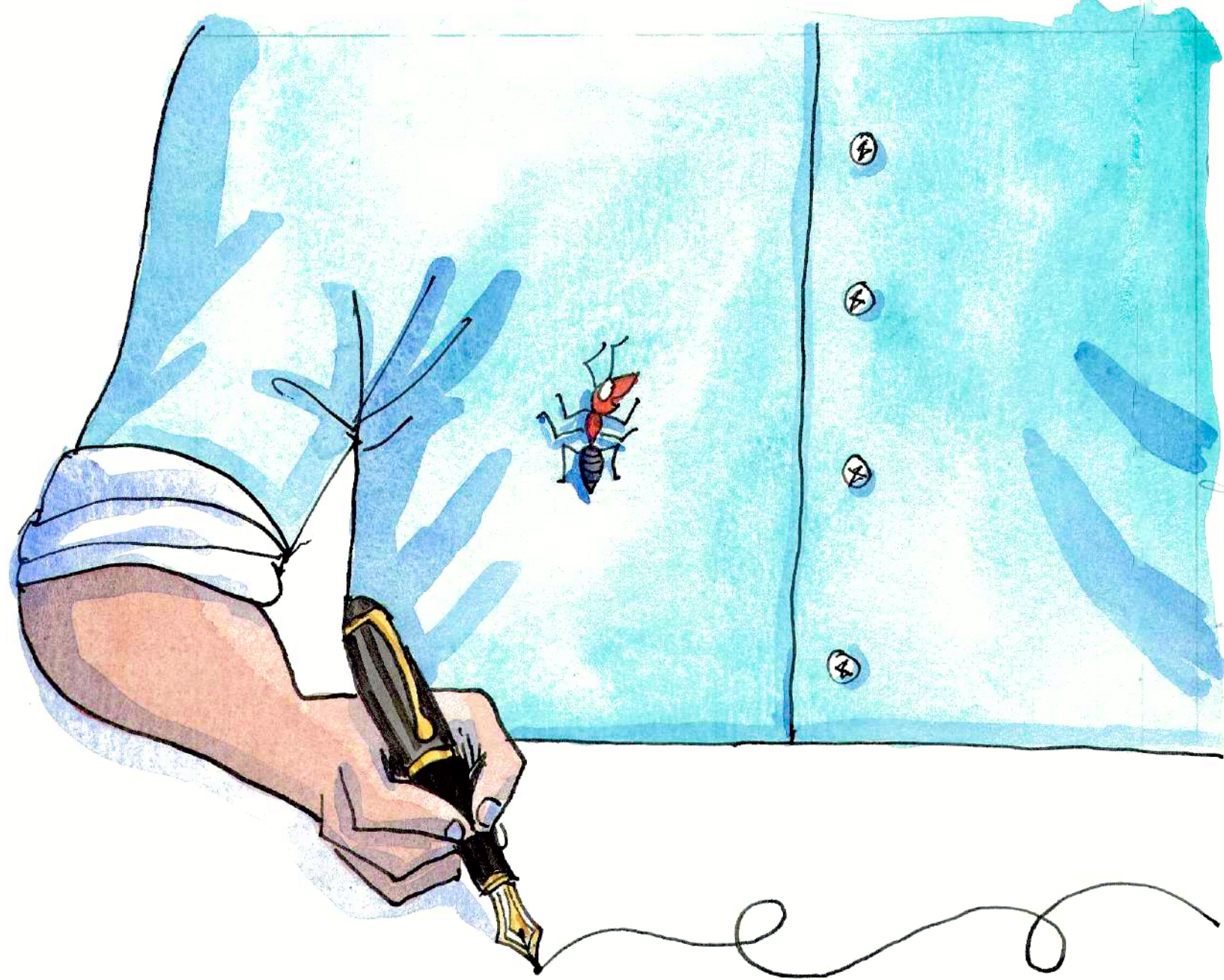




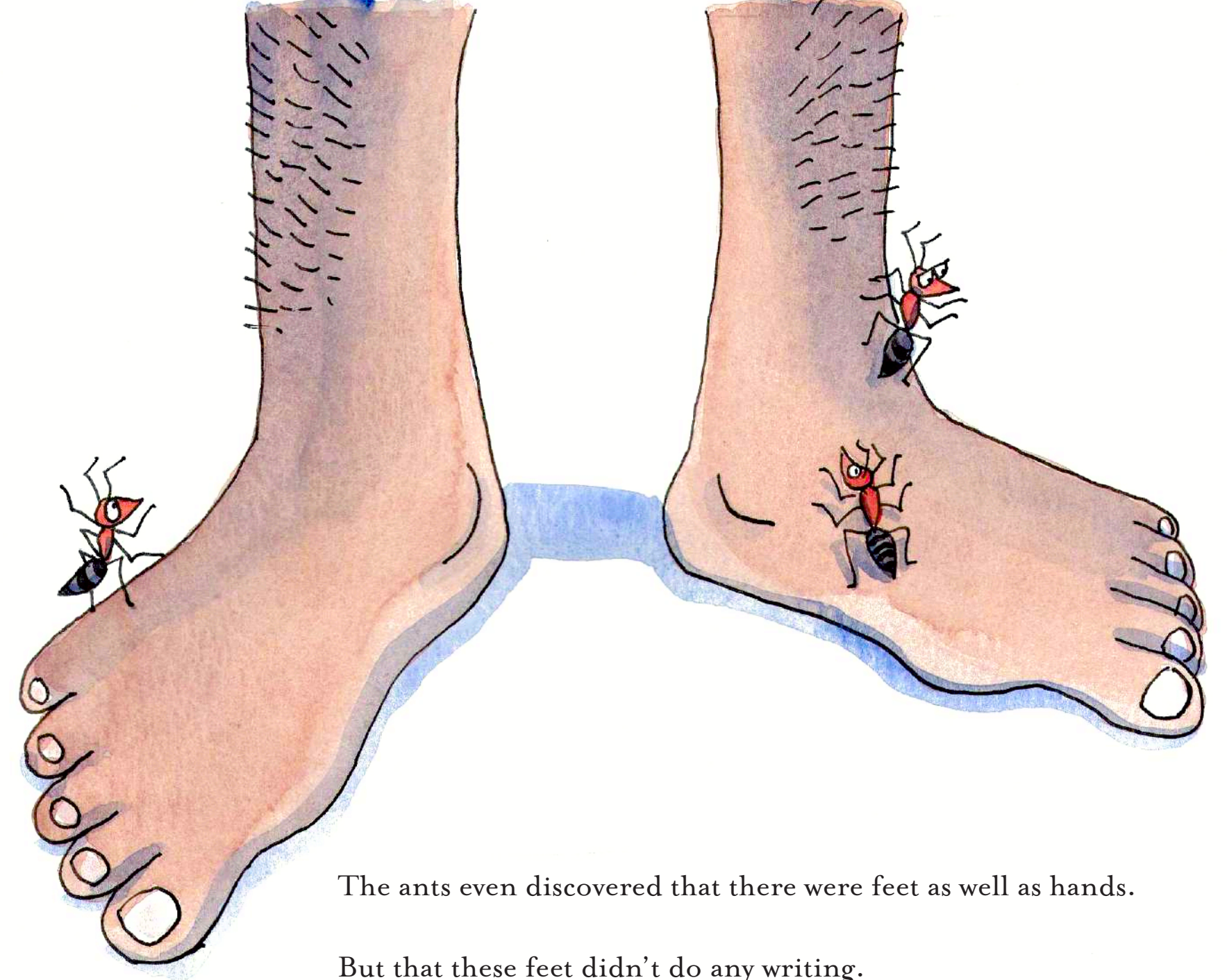
One ant discovered that the hand was attached to an arm.



Another discovered that the arm was attached to a body.

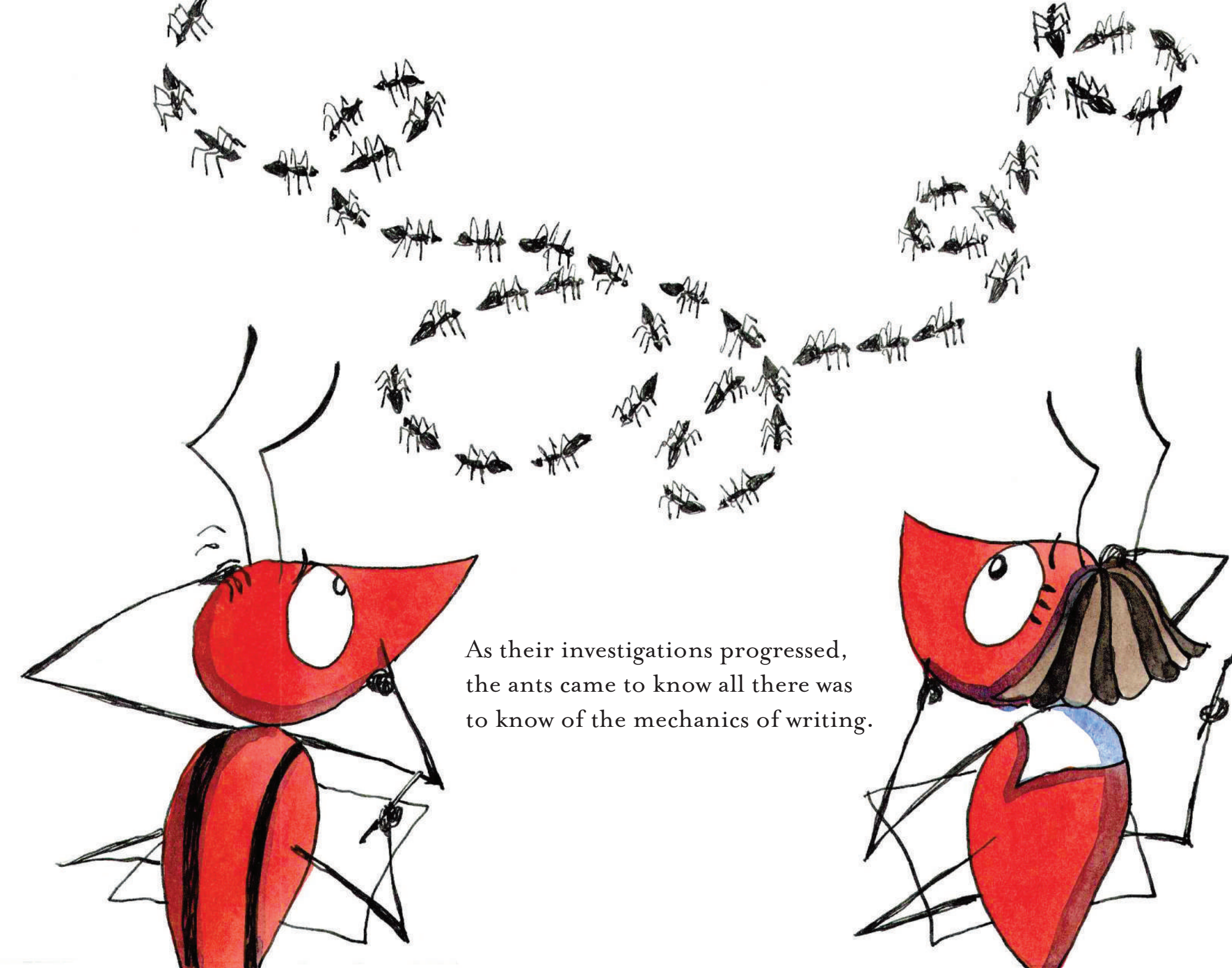


Another discovered that there were in fact two hands.

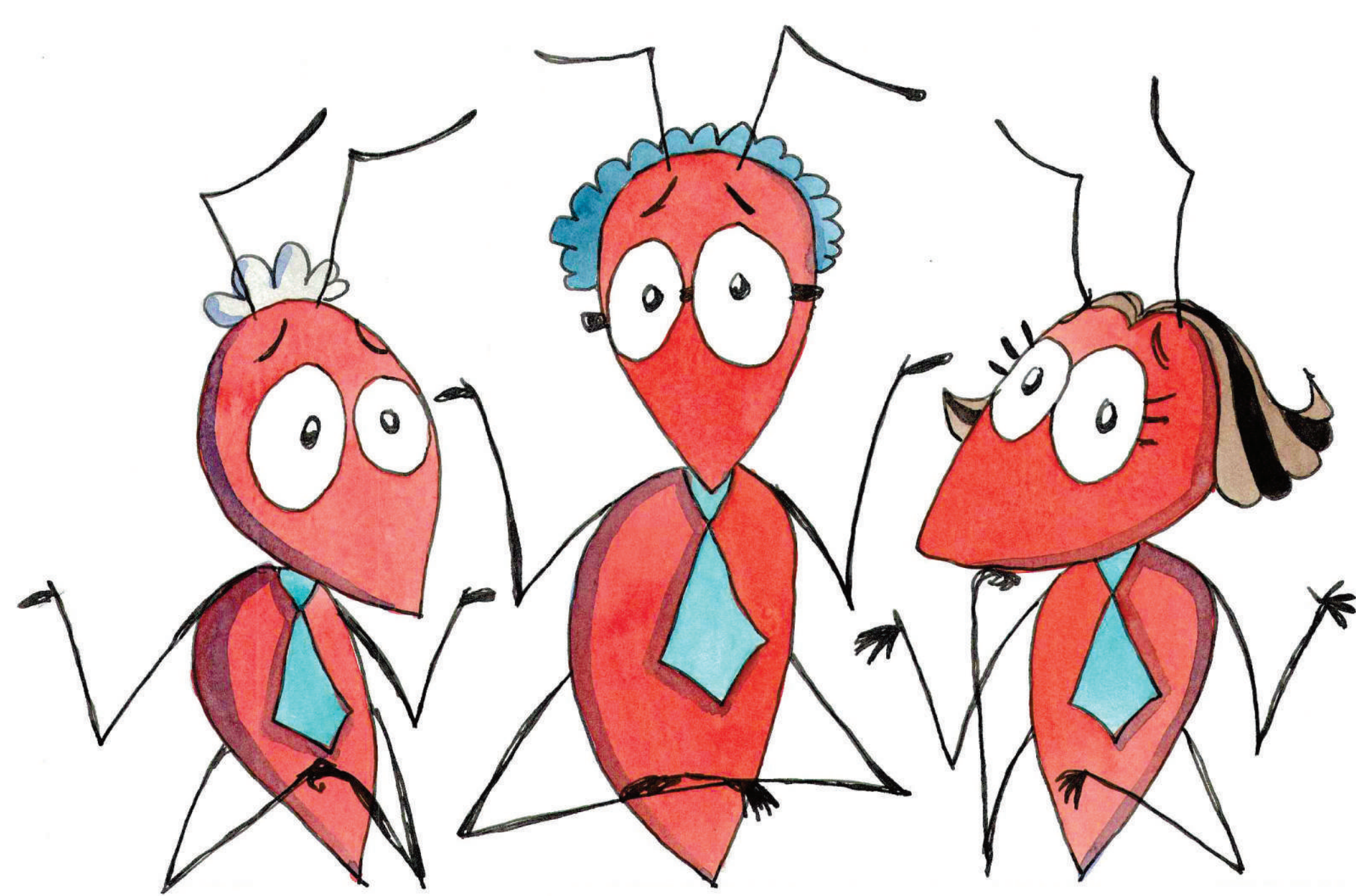


The ants even discovered that there were feet as well as hands.

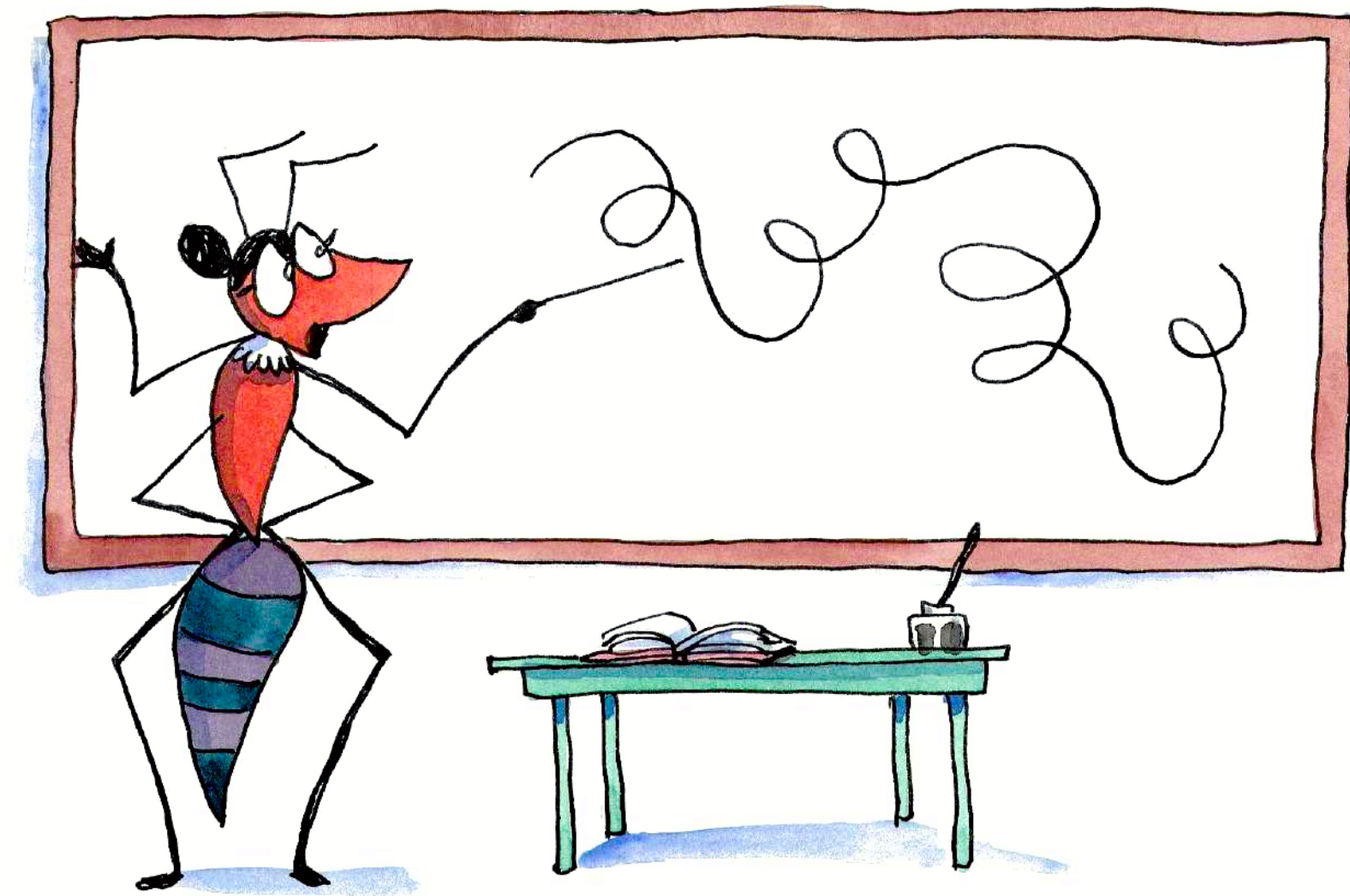
But that these feet didn't do any writing.



As their investigations progressed,
the ants came to know all there was
to know of the mechanics of writing.

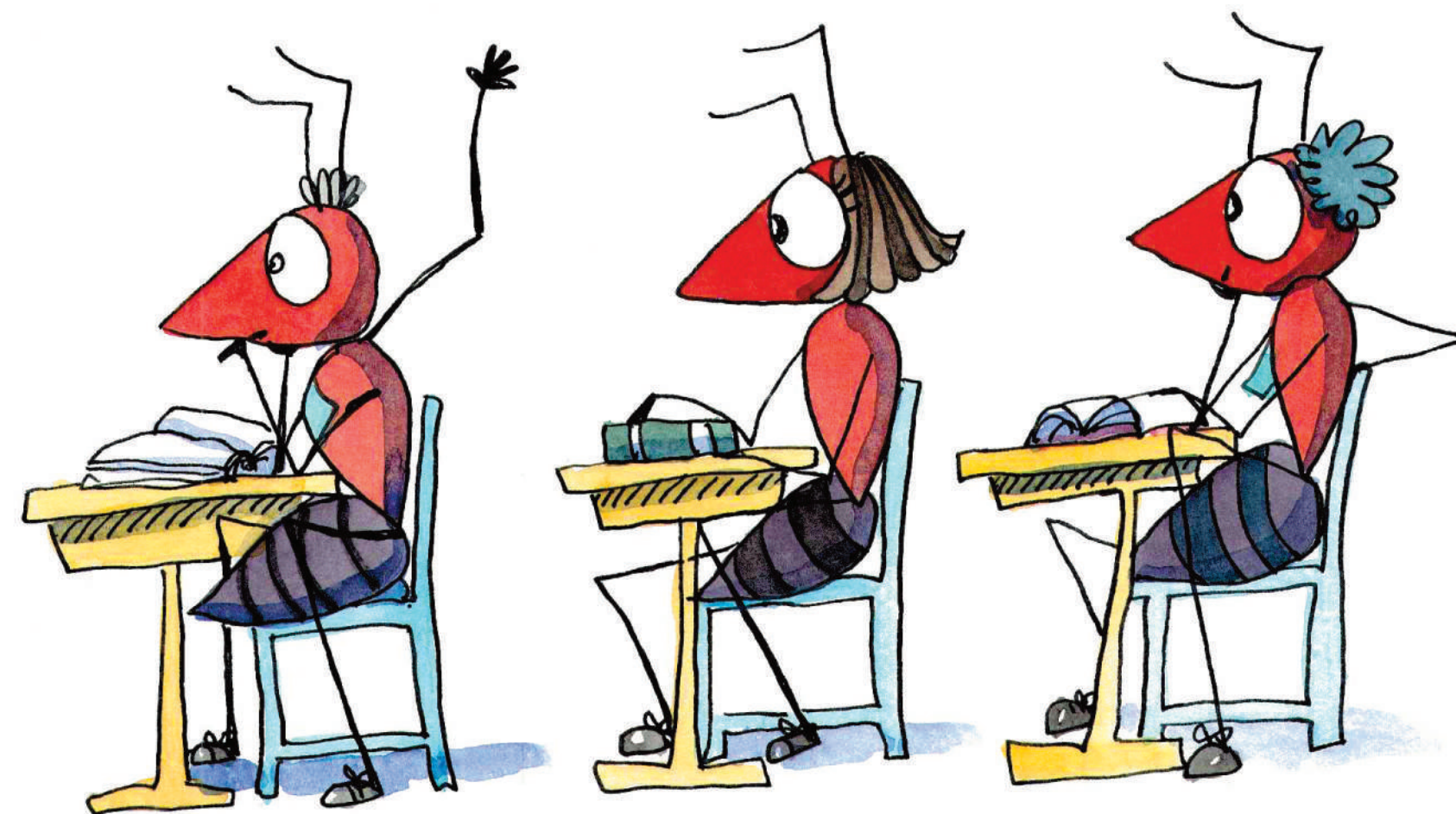


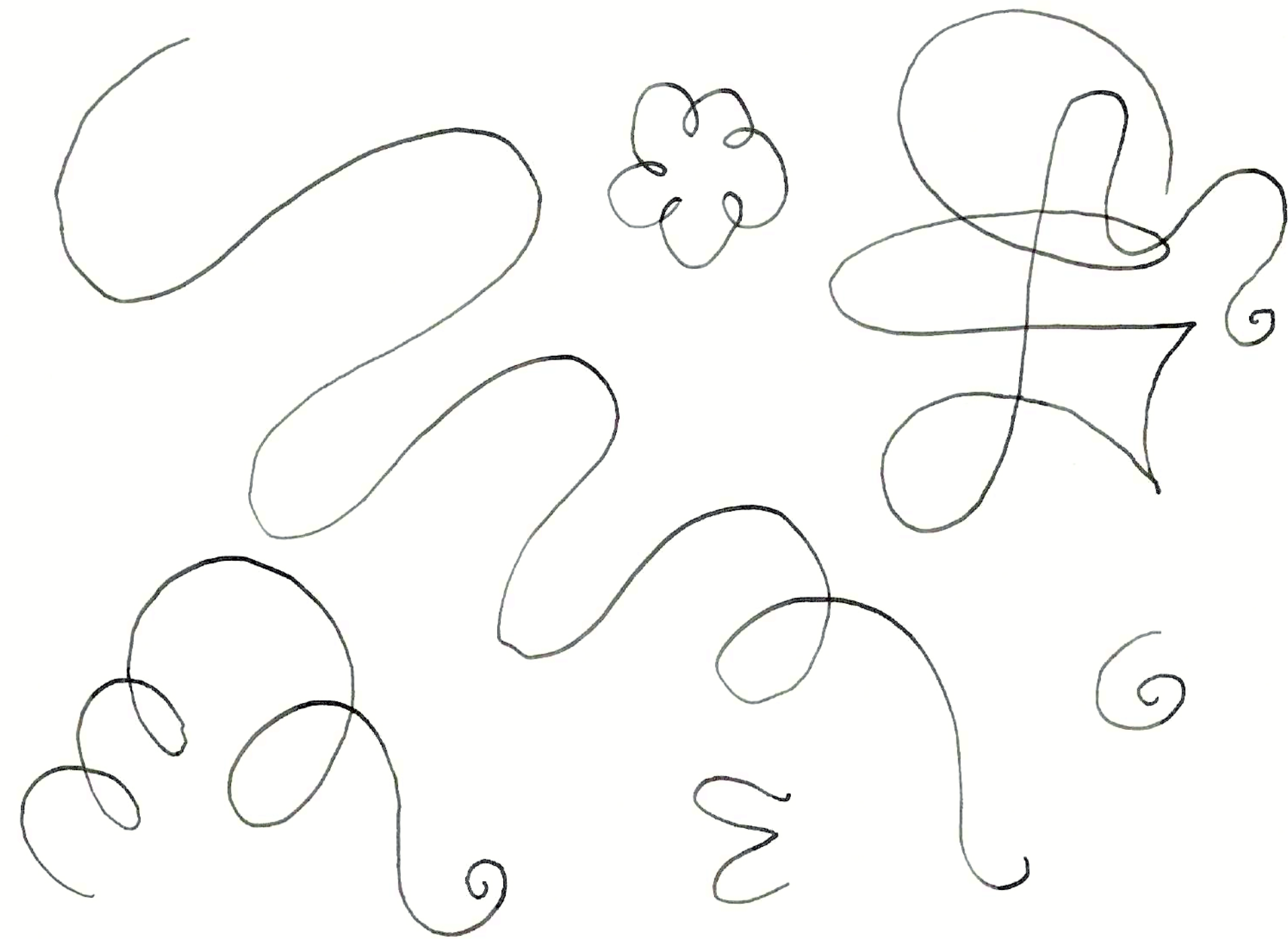
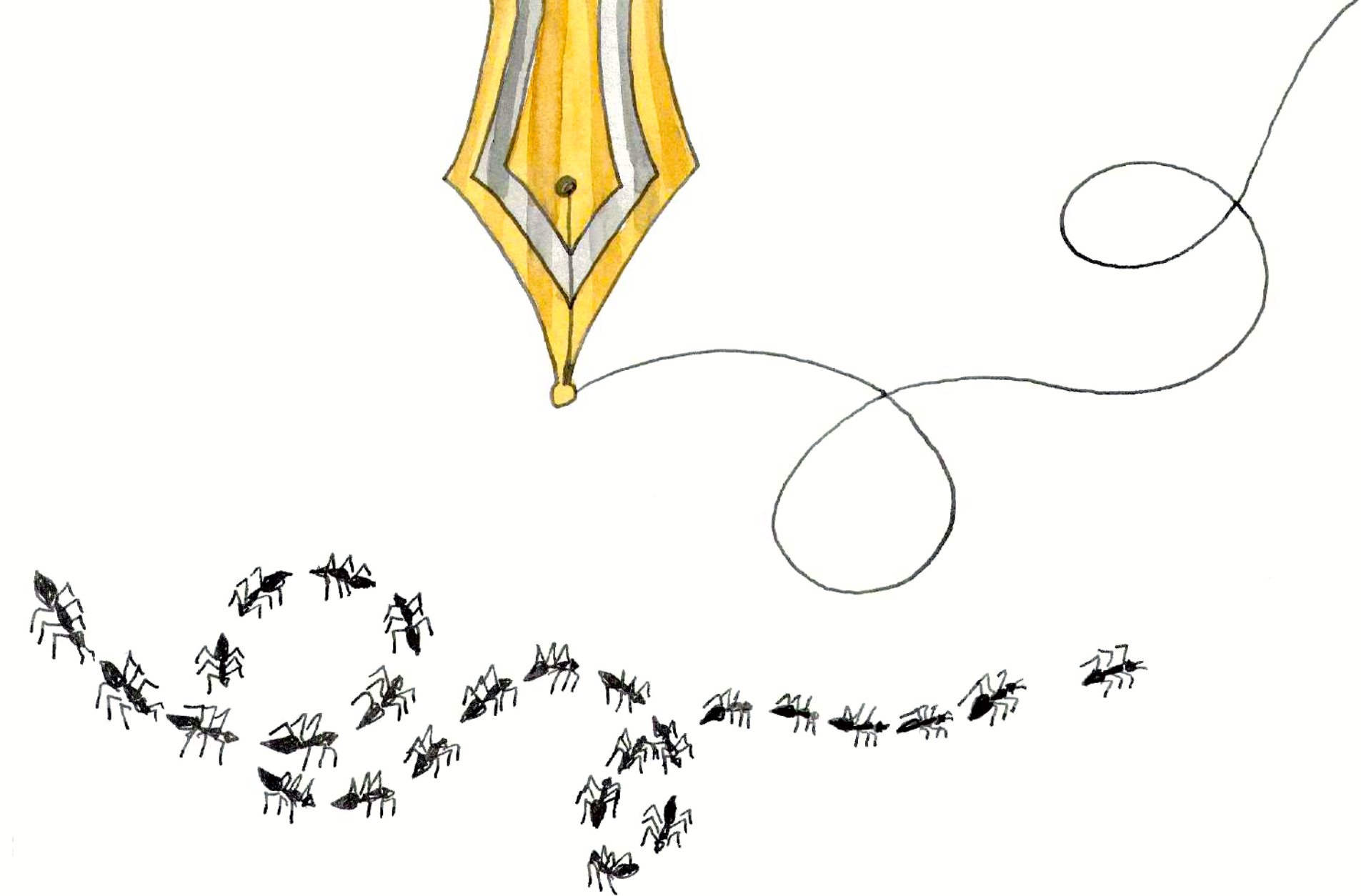
But because these investigations were based purely on the scientific,
the ants never came to understand anything of the actual writing itself.



So after all this time, if you were to ask an ant to read a word...
...or what message a squiggle is attempting to communicate...

...it would simply look at you blankly...







...and tell you that you had completely missed the point of thorough, ant-based research.



A small boy seeks and eventually finds his own name and is able to discard an old dream for a new and wonderful one.

This is one of a series of illustrated books for the young written by Idries Shah, whose collections of narratives and teaching stories have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life. It belongs to a tradition of storytelling from the Middle East and Central Asia that is more than a thousand years old.

Among the many insights that this story introduces to children is the idea that it takes patience and resolve to achieve one's goals in life.



ISBN 1-883536-20-0



9 781883 536206

Idries Shah / Caron

The Boy Without A Name



The Boy Without A Name

by Idries Shah

Illustrated by
Mona Caron





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Summary: A Sufi teaching tale of a boy without a name who visits a wise man and acquires both a name and a wonderful dream.
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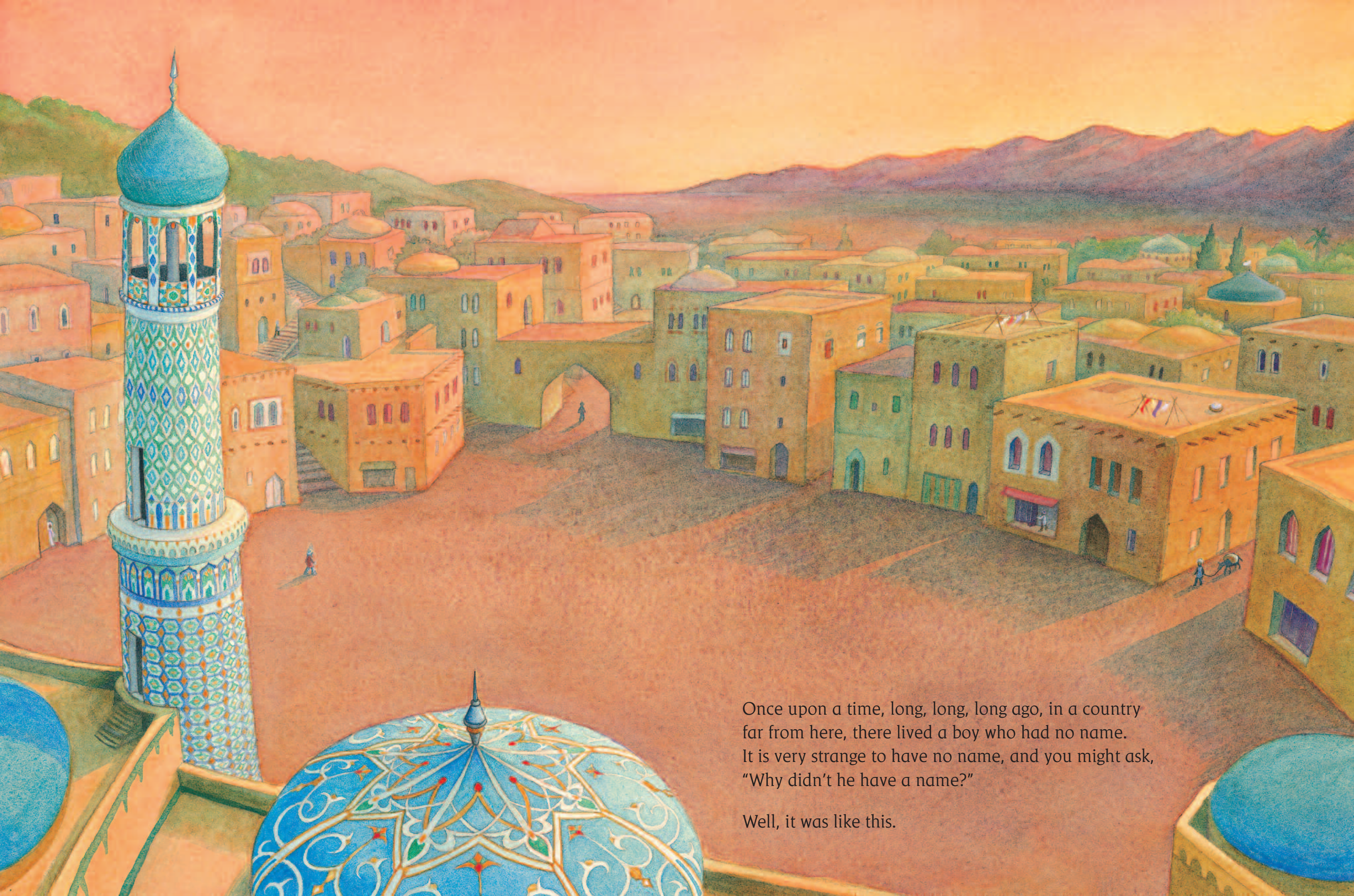
The Boy Without A Name

by

Idries Shah



HOPOE BOOKS
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Once upon a time, long, long, long ago, in a country far from here, there lived a boy who had no name. It is very strange to have no name, and you might ask, "Why didn't he have a name?"

Well, it was like this.



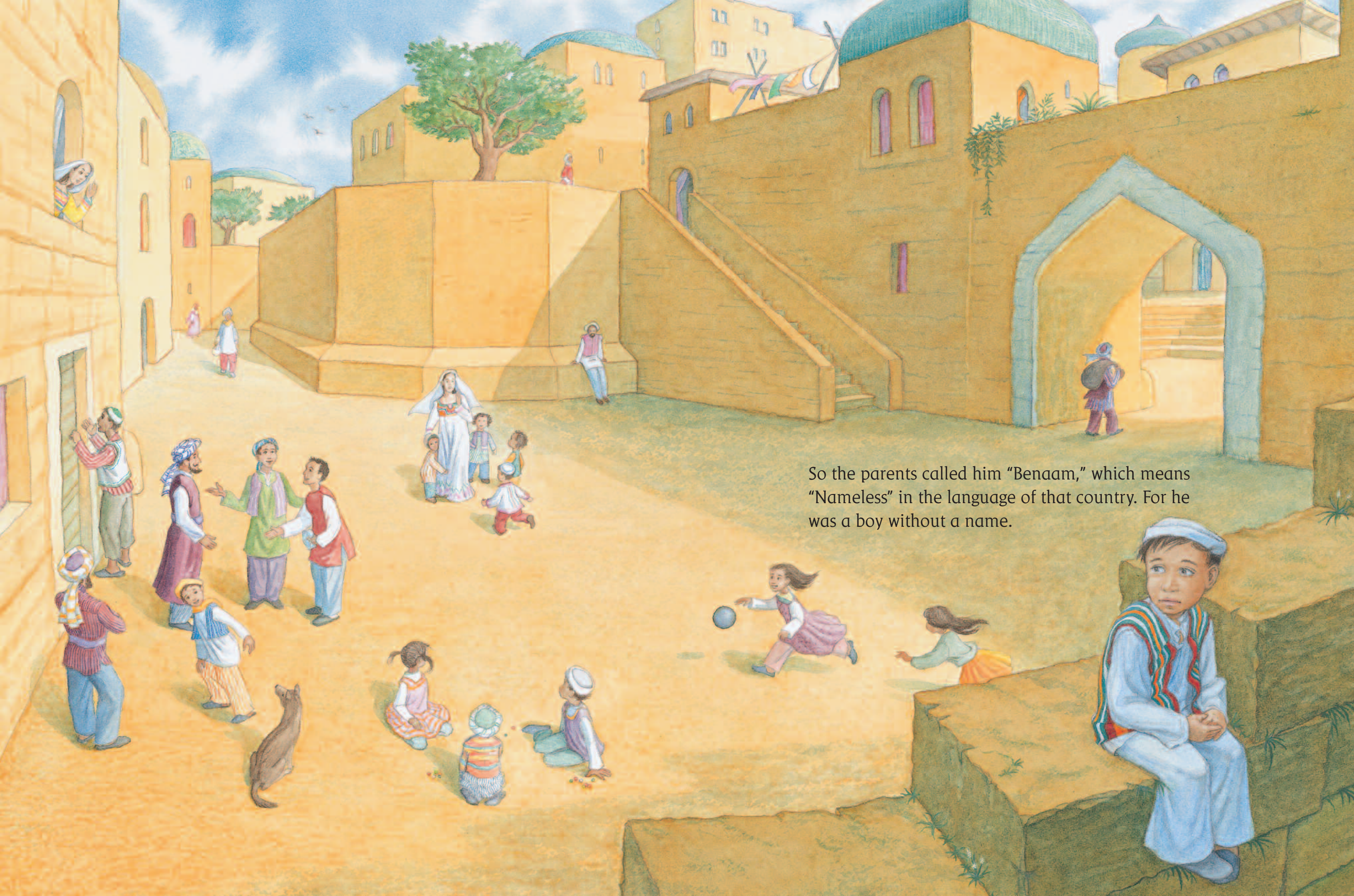
On the day he was born, his parents were just about to choose a name for him when a very wise man came to the house.

"This is a very, very important boy," he told them, "and I am going to give him something marvelous one day, but I will have to give him his name first. So please don't give him a name yet."

"All right," said his parents, "but when will he get a name?"

"I cannot say now," replied the wise man, "but remember, he is a very important boy and you must be careful not to give him a name."

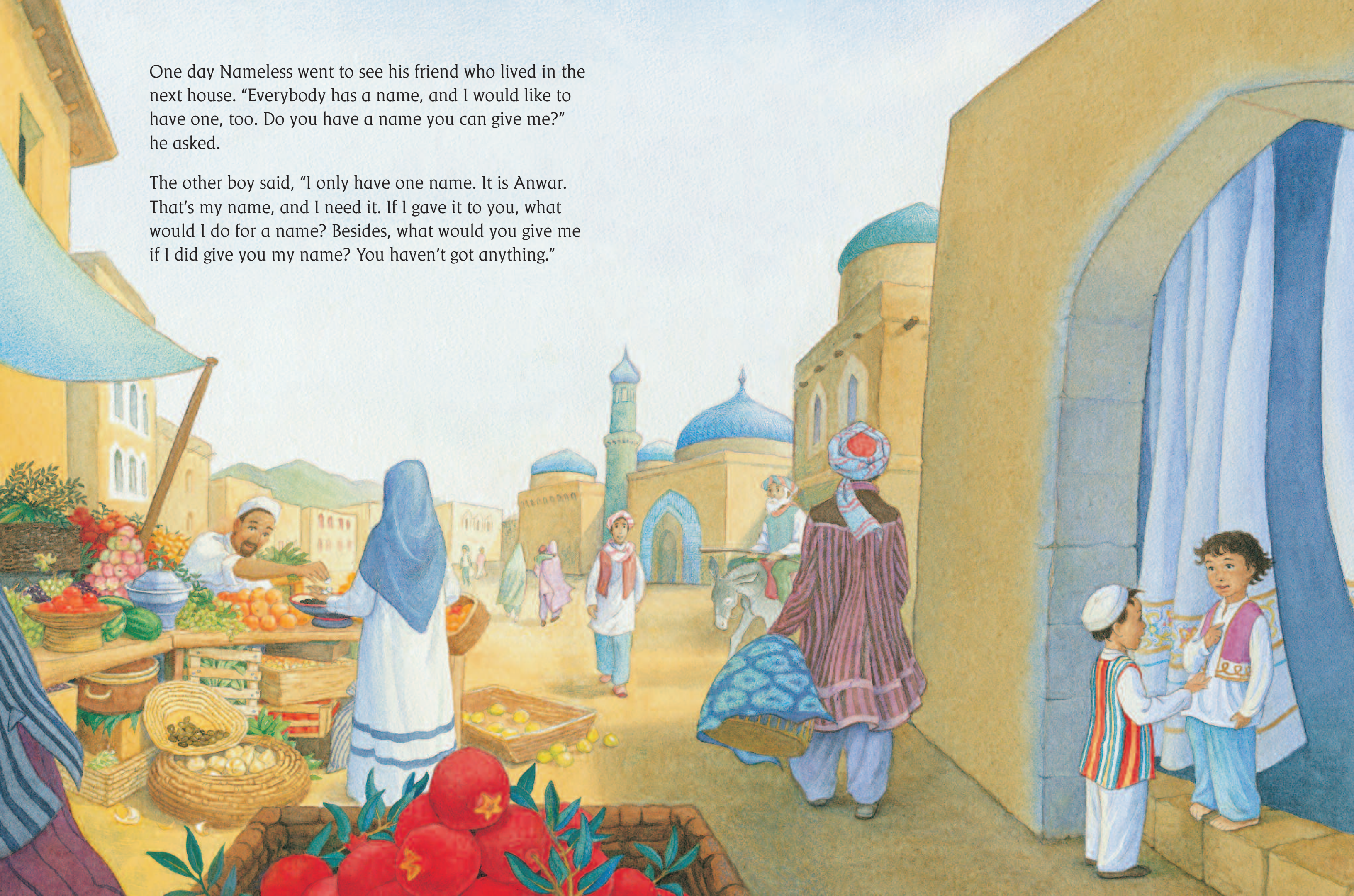




So the parents called him “Benaam,” which means “Nameless” in the language of that country. For he was a boy without a name.

One day Nameless went to see his friend who lived in the next house. "Everybody has a name, and I would like to have one, too. Do you have a name you can give me?" he asked.

The other boy said, "I only have one name. It is Anwar. That's my name, and I need it. If I gave it to you, what would I do for a name? Besides, what would you give me if I did give you my name? You haven't got anything."

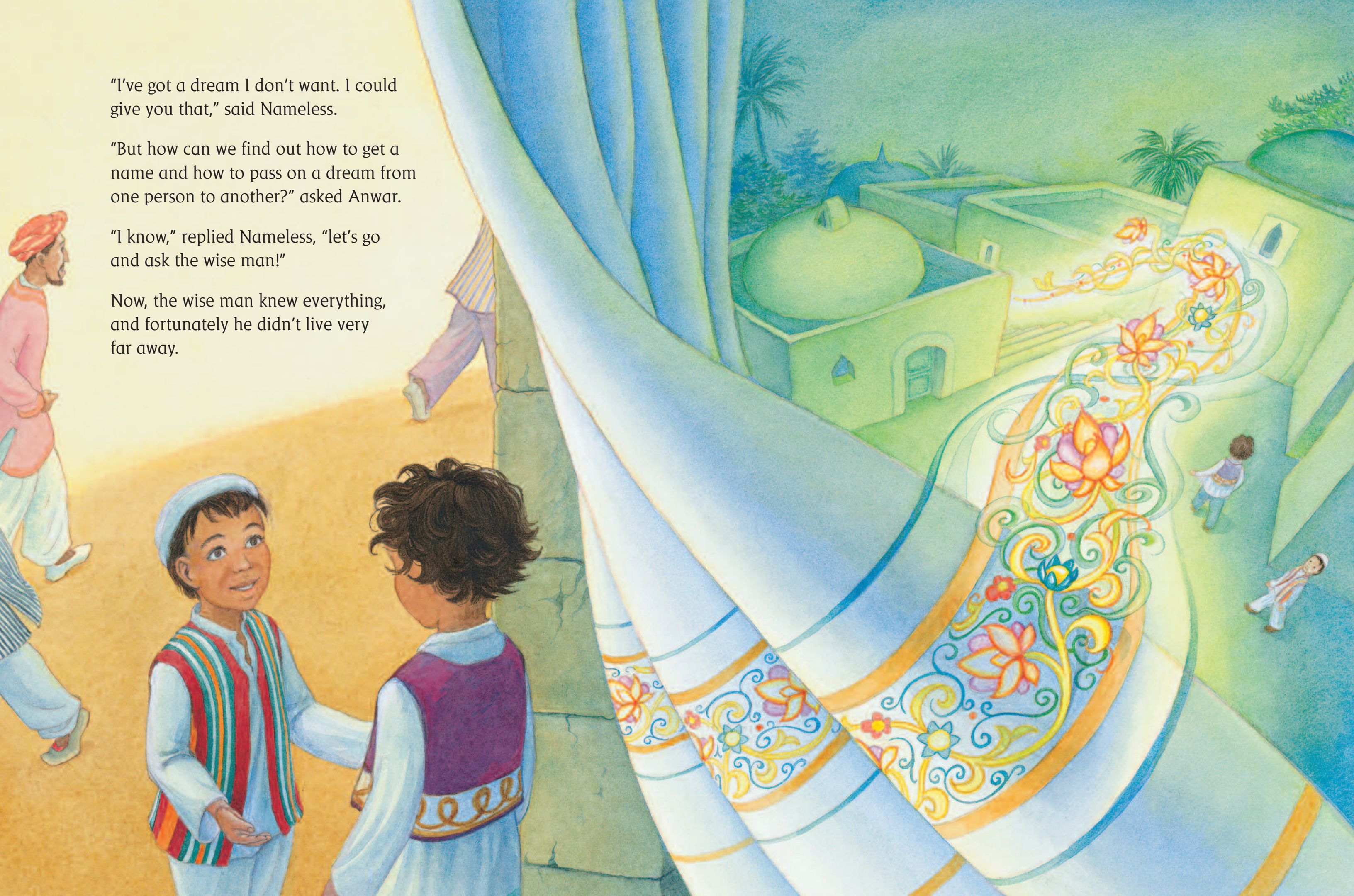


"I've got a dream I don't want. I could give you that," said Nameless.

"But how can we find out how to get a name and how to pass on a dream from one person to another?" asked Anwar.

"I know," replied Nameless, "let's go and ask the wise man!"

Now, the wise man knew everything, and fortunately he didn't live very far away.





So Nameless and Anwar went to his house and they knocked on the door. As soon as he saw them, the wise man said, "Come in, Nameless and Anwar!" even though he had never seen them before.

"How did you know who we were?" they asked.

"I know many things. And, besides, I was expecting you," said the wise man.

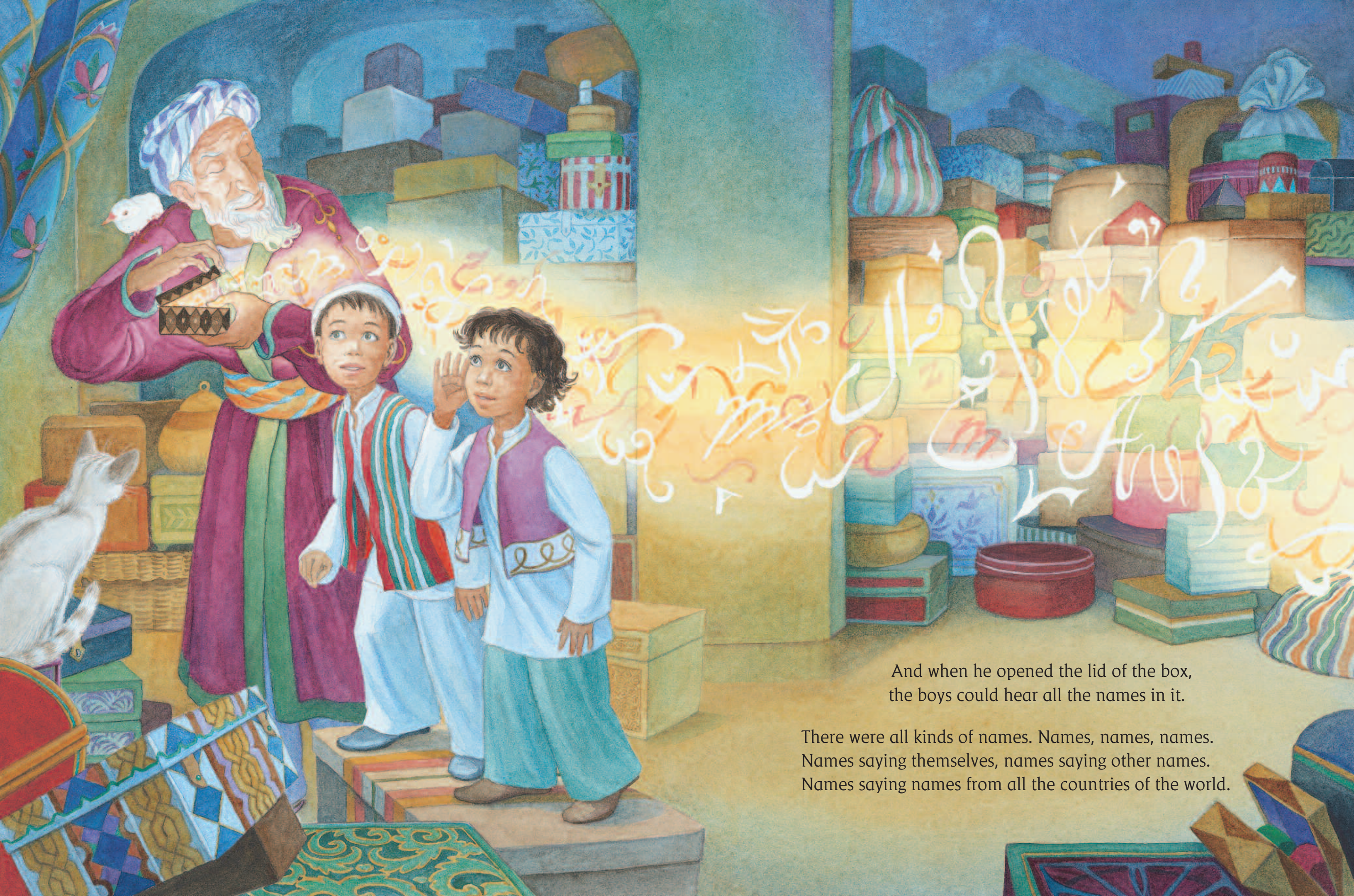


"Sit down here, and I'll see what I have in my magic boxes," he continued.

So the boys sat down on cushions beside the wise man.

And he took up a small box, saying, "This is a magic box, and it's absolutely full of all kinds of names. You just see."





And when he opened the lid of the box,
the boys could hear all the names in it.

There were all kinds of names. Names, names, names.
Names saying themselves, names saying other names.
Names saying names from all the countries of the world.

And the wise man picked a name out of the box and handed it to Nameless, and the name jumped onto his hand, ran up his arm and sprang onto his shoulder, and then it went into his ear and right into his head.



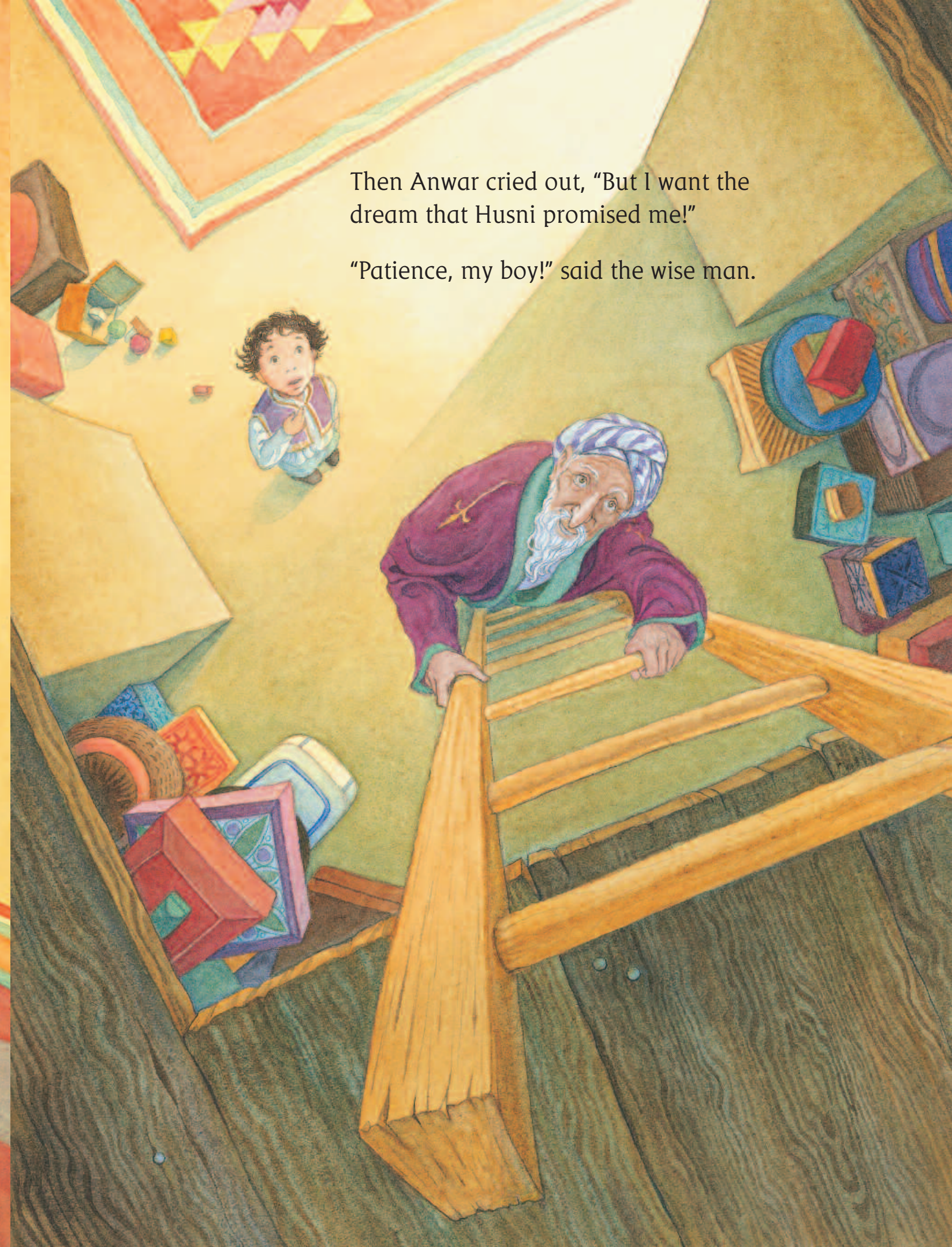
And suddenly he knew that he had a name!
“Hooray! Hooray!” he said, “I’ve got a name.
I am Husni!”

Husni was his name.



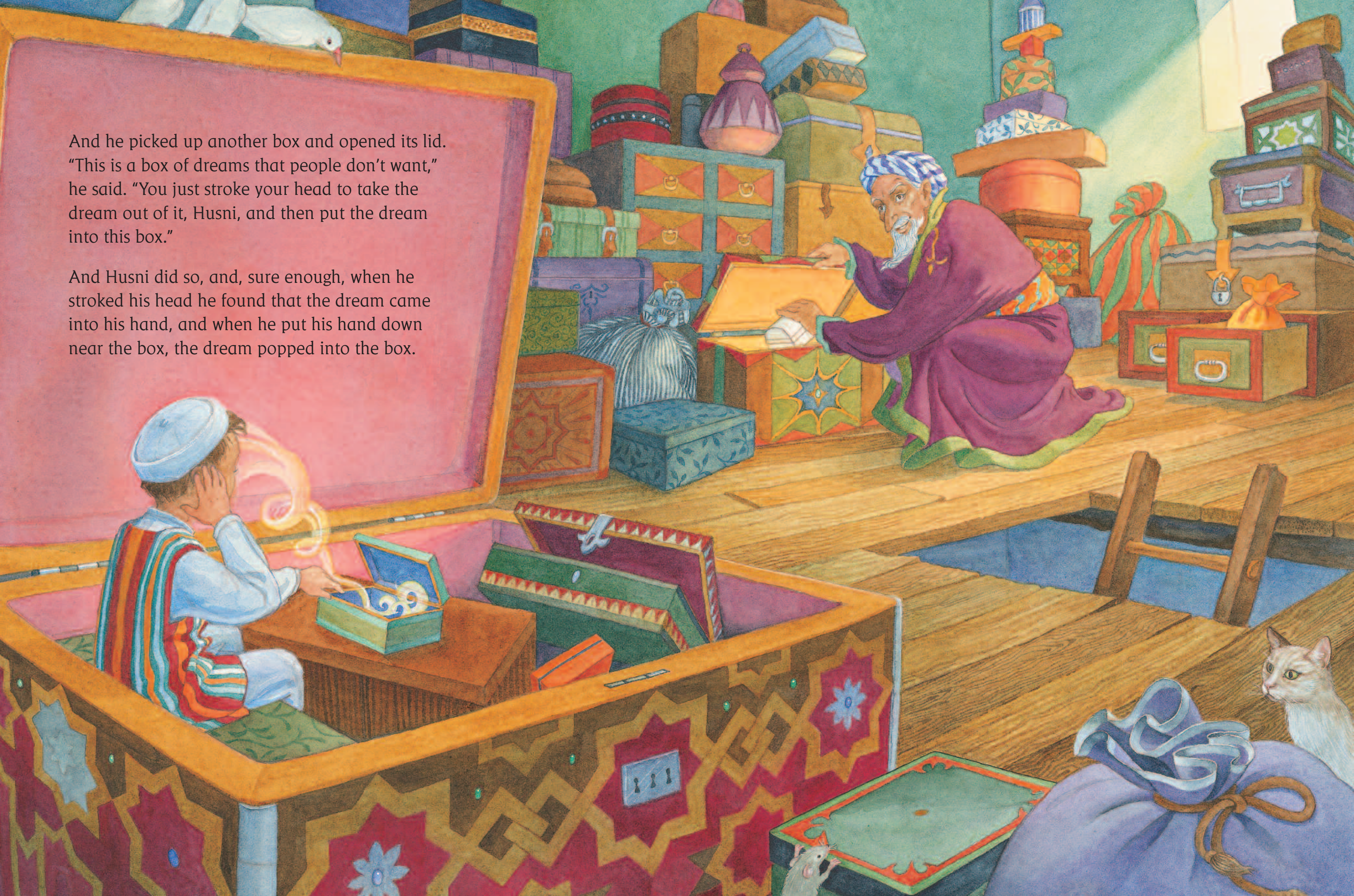
Then Anwar cried out, “But I want the
dream that Husni promised me!”

“Patience, my boy!” said the wise man.



And he picked up another box and opened its lid. "This is a box of dreams that people don't want," he said. "You just stroke your head to take the dream out of it, Husni, and then put the dream into this box."

And Husni did so, and, sure enough, when he stroked his head he found that the dream came into his hand, and when he put his hand down near the box, the dream popped into the box.



Then the wise man took up another box, and he opened the lid and said, "This box is full of wonderful dreams!" And the two boys could see all sorts of marvelous dreams inside.

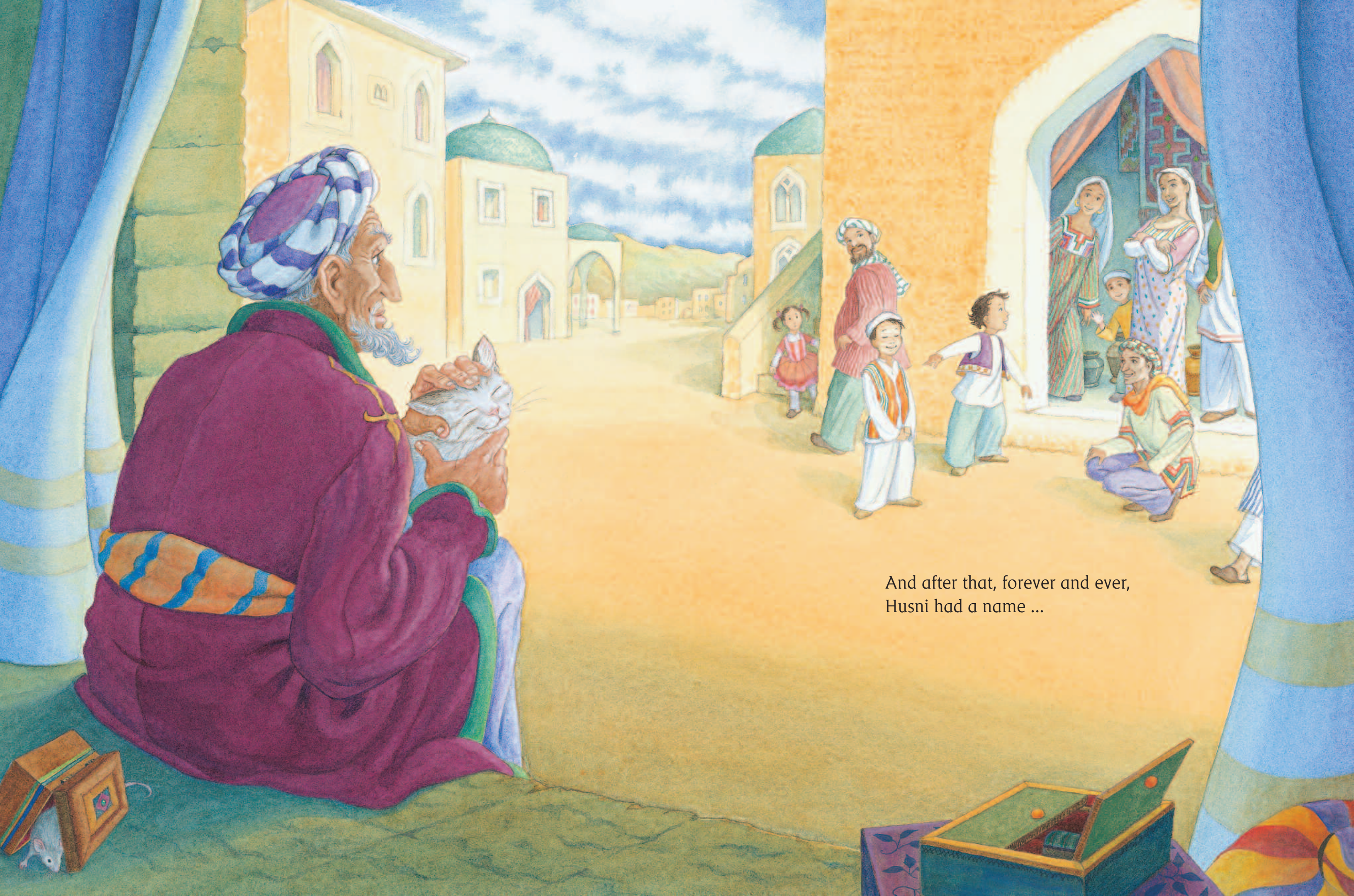


Wonderful, wonderful dreams!

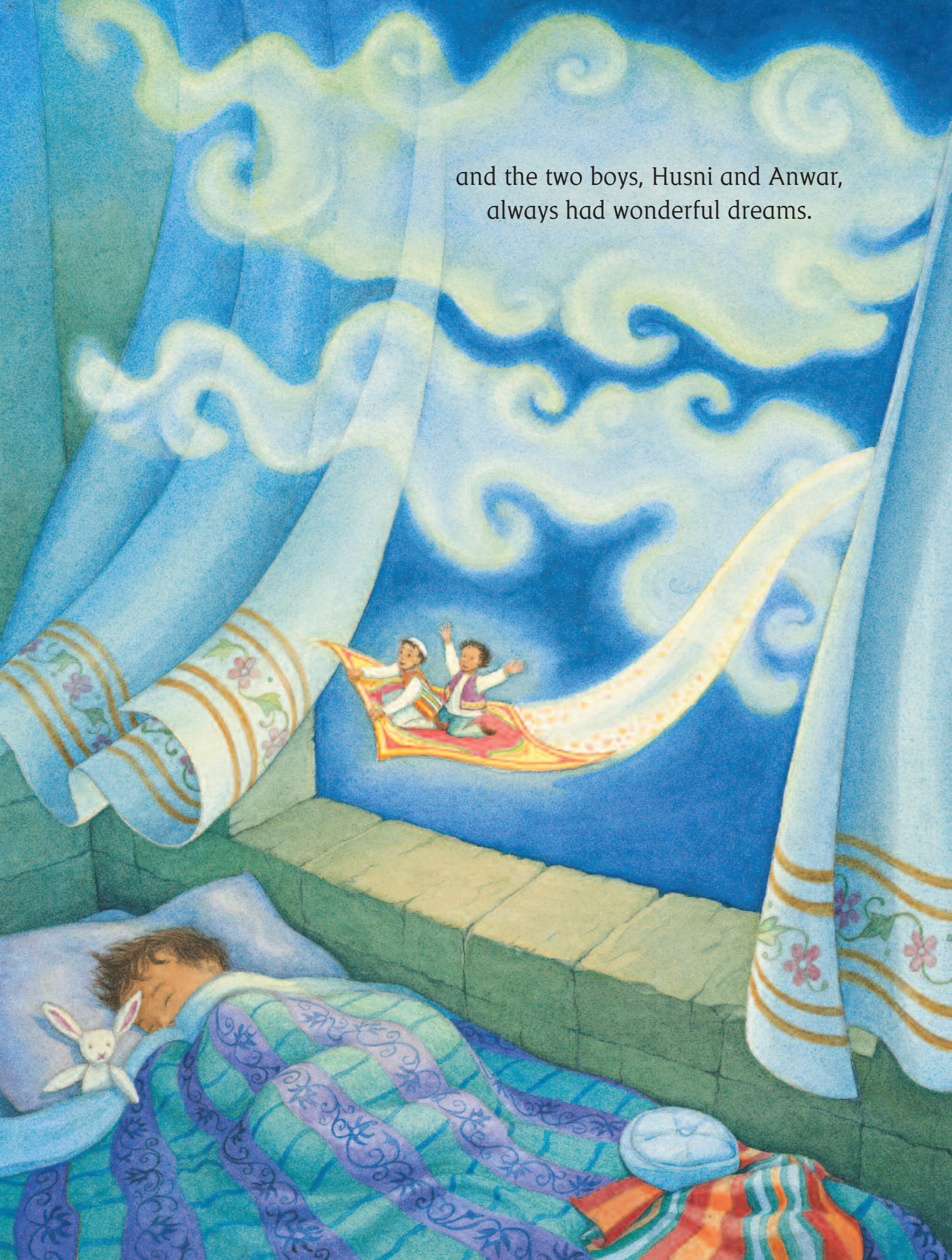


"I am going to give you one dream each," said the wise man. And then he asked them each to pick a dream. And they did. And the dreams, as soon as they caught hold of them, ran up their arms, onto their shoulders, into their ears and right into their heads, just as Husni's name had done.





And after that, forever and ever,
Husni had a name ...



and the two boys, Husni and Anwar,
always had wonderful dreams.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

- The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
- The Silly Chicken
- The Farmer's Wife
- Neem the Half-Boy
- The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
- The Magic Horse
- World Tales

Literature

- The Hundred Tales of Wisdom
- A Perfumed Scorpion
- Caravan of Dreams
- Wisdom of the Idiots
- The Magic Monastery
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Novel

- Kara Kush

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- Oriental Magic
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- The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin
- The Subtleties of the Inimitable Mulla Nasrudin
- Special Illumination

Travel

- Destination Mecca

Human Thought

- Learning How to Learn
- The Elephant in the Dark
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- The Commanding Self
- Knowing How to Know

Studies of the English

- Darkest England
- The Natives are Restless



When a boy visits another village, he is surprised to find the townspeople terrified of something that—just because they have not seen it before—they mistake for a terrible, dangerous animal. With his own knowledge and by demonstration, he helps them overcome their fears.

This story is part of an oral tradition from the Middle East and Central Asia that is more than a thousand years old. In an entertaining way, it introduces children to an interesting aspect of human behavior and so enables them to recognize it in their daily life.

One of many tales from the body of Sufi literature collected by **Idries Shah**, the tale is presented here as part of his series of books for young readers.

This is the second book of the series illustrated by **Rose Mary Santiago**, following the award-winning best-seller, *The Farmer's Wife*.

ISBN 1-883536-18-9



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Idries Shah / Santiago

The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal



The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal

By Idries Shah

Illustrated by Rose Mary Santiago



For Francisco and Christopher — RMS

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Summary: A Sufi teaching tale of a boy who visits another village and helps the townspeople deal with their fear of something that they have mistaken for a terrible, dangerous animal.

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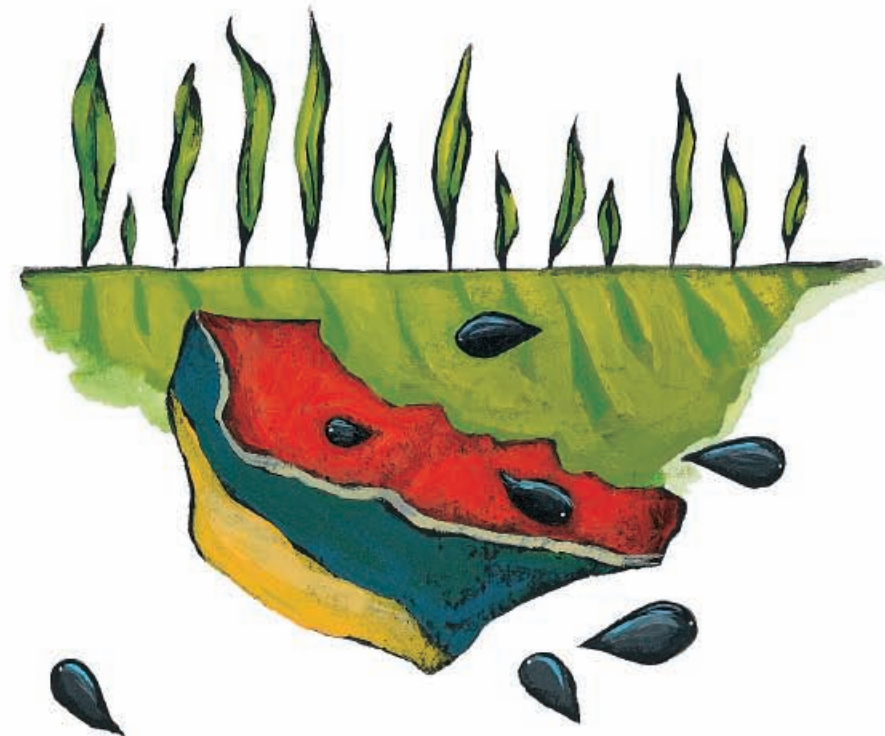
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The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal



By Idries Shah

Once upon a time there was a very clever boy who lived in a village.

Nearby was another village that he had never visited.

When he was old enough to be allowed to go about on his own, he thought he would like to see the other village.



So one day, he asked his mother if he could go, and she said, “Yes, as long as you look both ways before you cross the road. You must be very careful!”

The boy agreed and set off at once. When he got to the side of the road, he looked both ways. And because there was nothing coming, he knew he could cross safely.

And that’s just what he did.



Then he skipped down the road towards the other village.

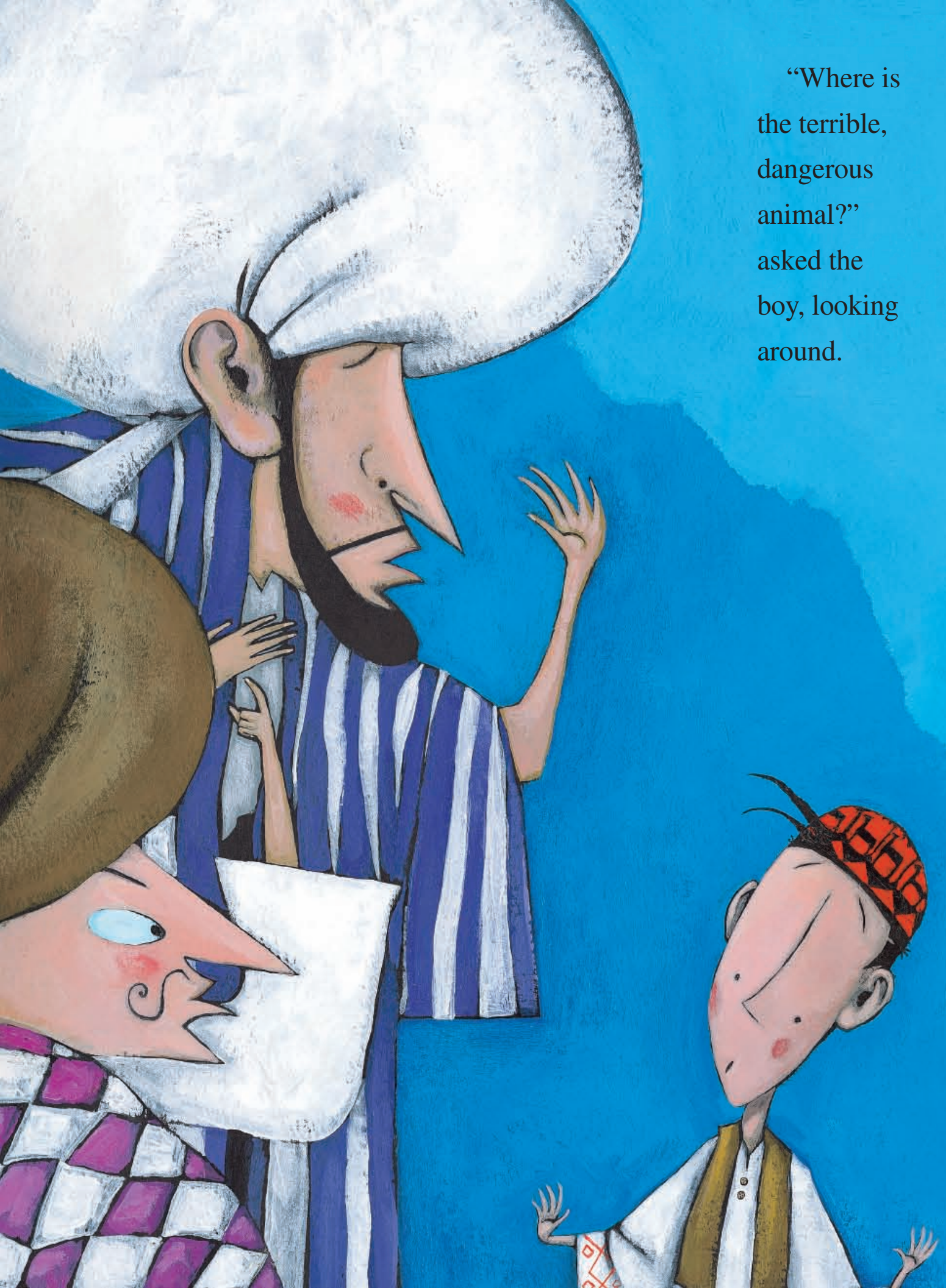


Just outside that village he came upon a crowd of people who were standing in a field, and he went up to them to see what they were doing. As he drew near, he heard them saying “Oooo” and “Ahhh” and “Ohhh,” and he saw that they looked quite frightened.



He went up to one of the men and said, “Why are you saying ‘Oooo’ and ‘Ahhh’ and ‘Ohhh,’ and why are you all so frightened?”

“Oh dear me!” said the man. “There is a terrible, dangerous animal in this field, and we are all very frightened because it might attack us!”

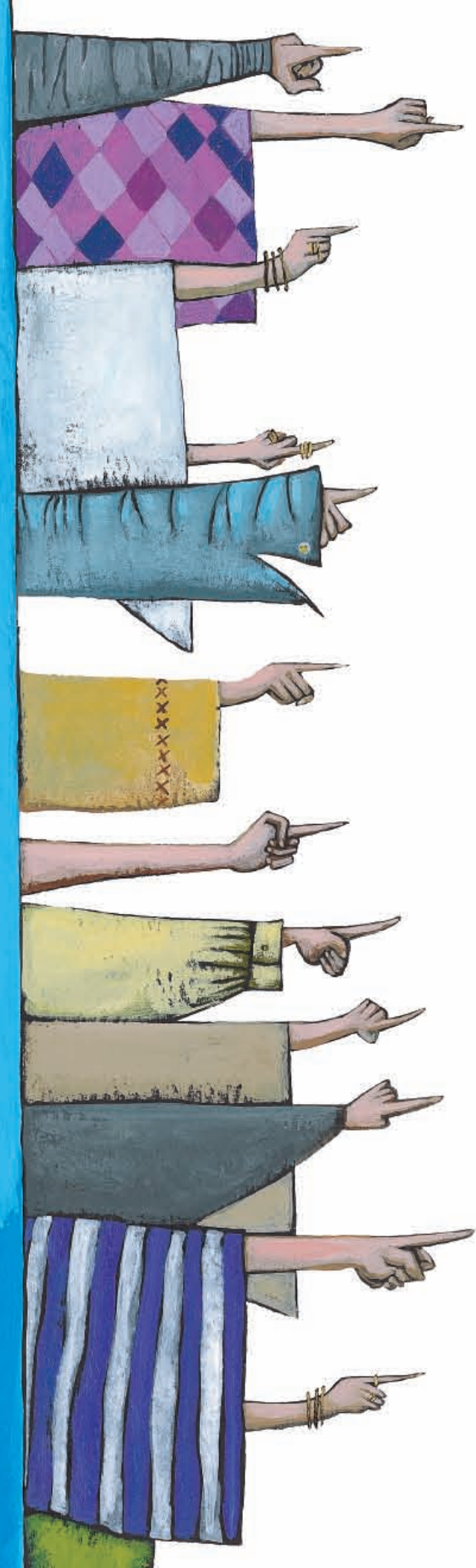


“Where is
the terrible,
dangerous
animal?”
asked the
boy, looking
around.

“Oh! Be
careful! Be
careful!” cried
the people.

But the
clever boy
asked again,
“Where is
the terrible,
dangerous
animal?”

And so the
people pointed
to the middle
of the field.



And when
the boy looked
where they
pointed, he saw
a very large ...



... WATERMELON!



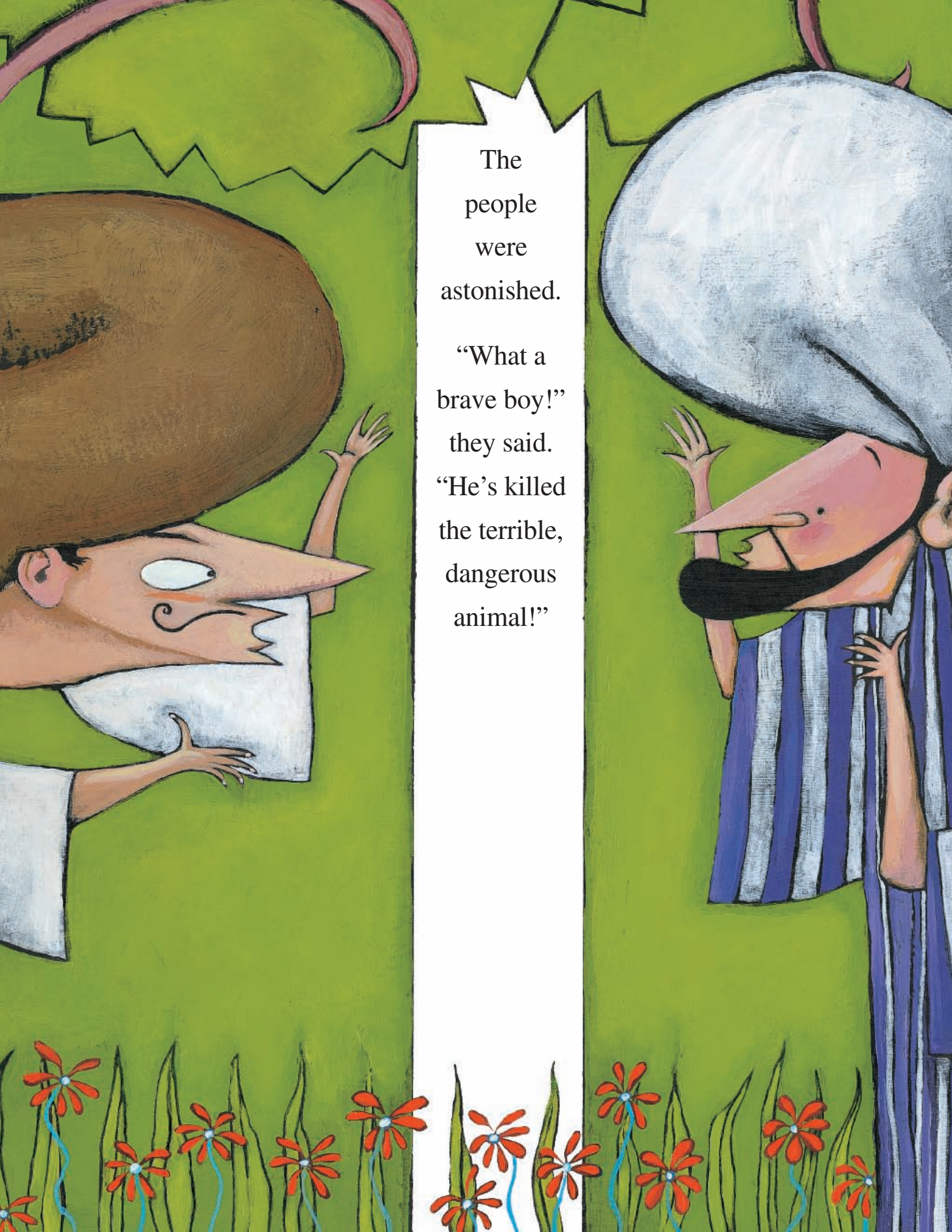
“That’s not a terrible, dangerous animal!” laughed the boy.

“Yes, it is! It is!” cried the people. “Keep away! It might bite you!”

Now the boy saw that these people were very silly indeed, so he said to them, “I’ll go and kill this dangerous animal for you.”

“No, no!” cried the people. “It’s too terrible! It’s too dangerous! It might bite you! Oooo! Ahhh! Ohhh!”

But the boy went right up to the watermelon, took a knife out of his pocket, and cut a large slice out of it.



The
people
were
astonished.

“What a
brave boy!”
they said.
“He’s killed
the terrible,
dangerous
animal!”



As they spoke, the boy took a bite out of the large
slice of watermelon. It tasted delicious!

“Look!” cried the people. “Now he’s eating the terrible, dangerous animal! He must be a terrible, dangerous boy!”

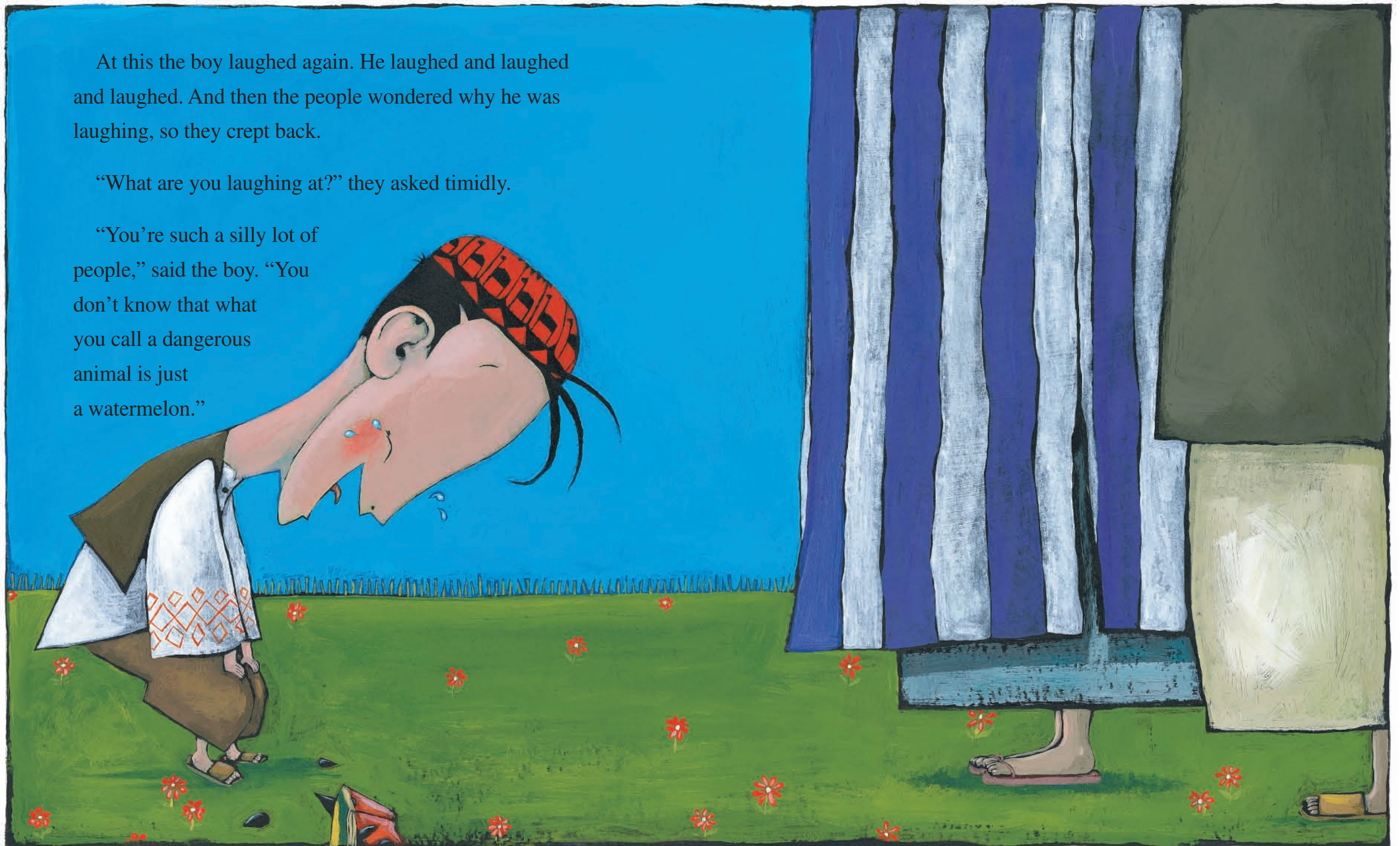
As the boy walked away from the middle of the field, waving his knife and eating the watermelon, the people ran away, saying, “Don’t attack us, you terrible, dangerous boy. Keep away!”



At this the boy laughed again. He laughed and laughed and laughed. And then the people wondered why he was laughing, so they crept back.

“What are you laughing at?” they asked timidly.

“You’re such a silly lot of people,” said the boy. “You don’t know that what you call a dangerous animal is just a watermelon.”



“Watermelons are very nice to eat. We’ve got lots of them in our village ...



and everyone eats them.”





Then the people became interested, and someone said,
“Well, how do we get watermelons?”

“You take the seeds out of a watermelon and you plant them
like this,” he said, putting a few of the seeds in the ground.

“Then you
give them water
and look after
them. And after
a while, lots and
lots of water-
melons will
grow from the
seeds.”



So the
people did
what the boy
showed
them.



And now, in all the fields of that village,
they have lots, and lots, and lots of watermelons.





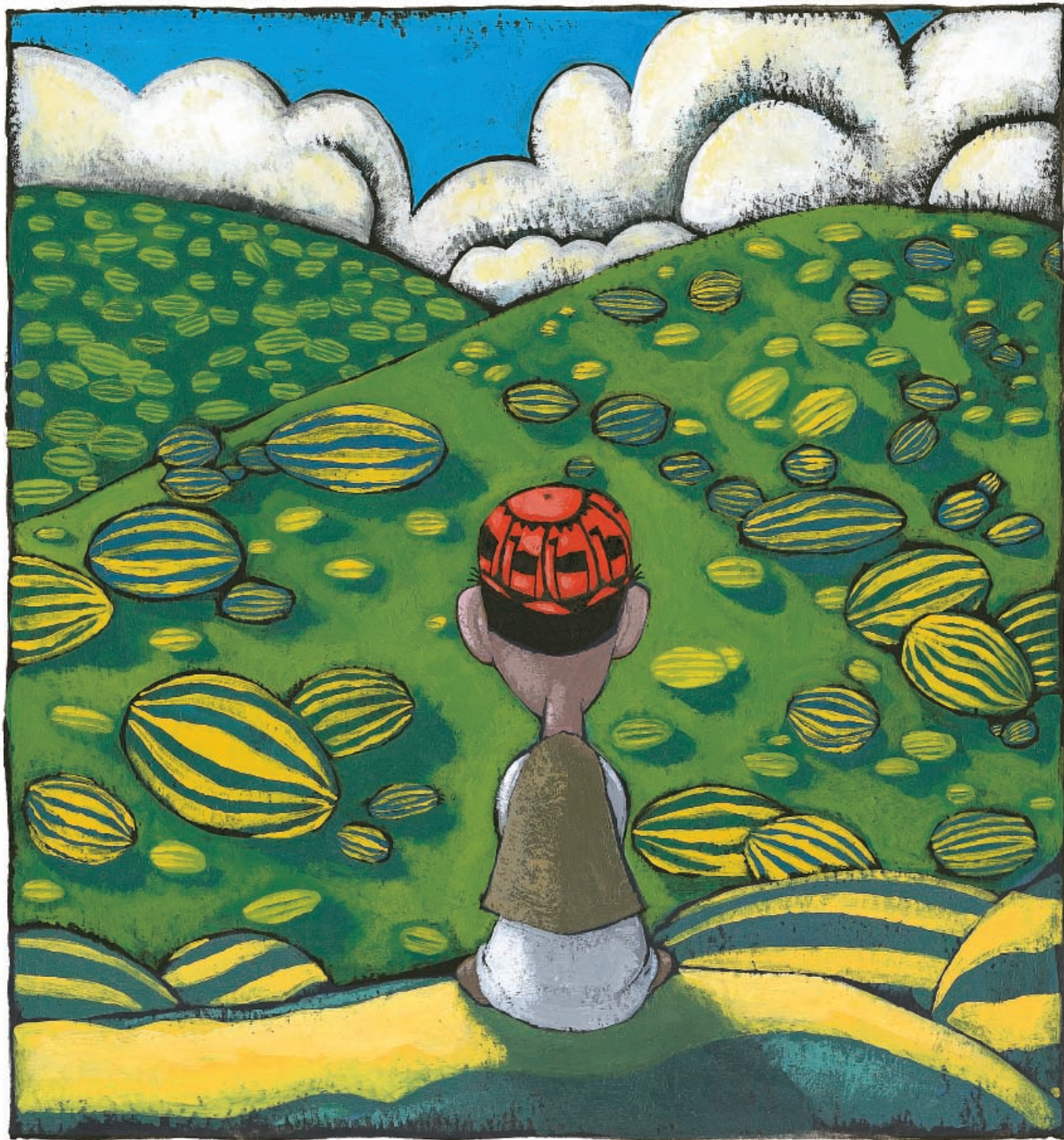
They sell some,

and they eat some ...



And that's why their village is
called Watermelon Village.





And just think. It all happened because a clever boy
was not afraid when a lot of silly people thought something
was dangerous just because they had never seen it before.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

The Boy Without a Name
The Silly Chicken
Neem the Half-Boy
The Farmer's Wife
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
The Magic Horse
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Man with Bad Manners
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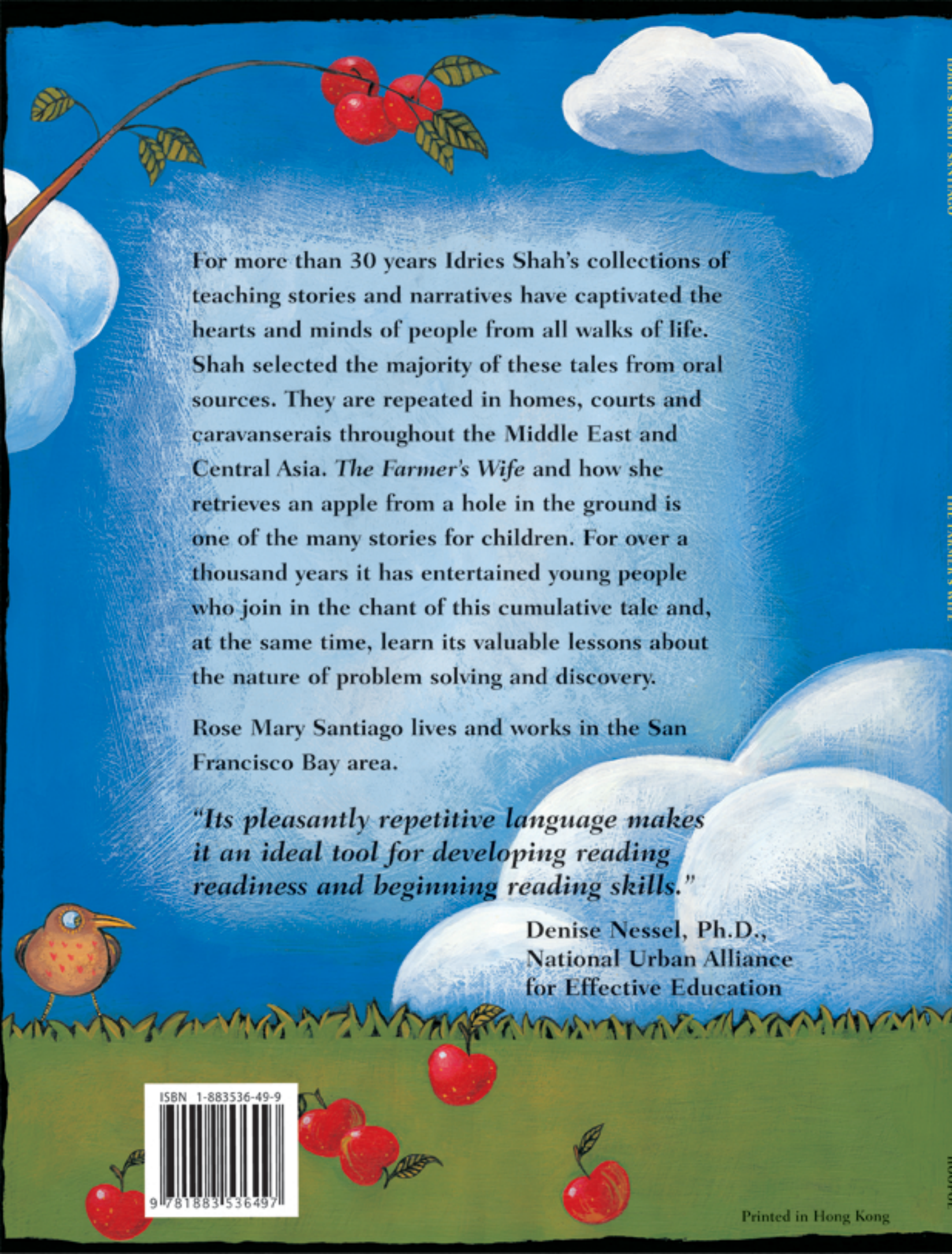
Sufi Studies

The Sufis
The Way of the Sufi
Tales of the Dervishes
The Book of the Book
Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
The Commanding Self
Knowing How to Know

Studies of the English

Darkest England
The Natives are Restless





For more than 30 years Idries Shah's collections of teaching stories and narratives have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life. Shah selected the majority of these tales from oral sources. They are repeated in homes, courts and caravanserais throughout the Middle East and Central Asia. *The Farmer's Wife* and how she retrieves an apple from a hole in the ground is one of the many stories for children. For over a thousand years it has entertained young people who join in the chant of this cumulative tale and, at the same time, learn its valuable lessons about the nature of problem solving and discovery.

Rose Mary Santiago lives and works in the San Francisco Bay area.

"Its pleasantly repetitive language makes it an ideal tool for developing reading readiness and beginning reading skills."

Denise Nessel, Ph.D.,
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ISBN 1-883536-49-9



9 781883 536497

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The Farmer's Wife

by Idries Shah

Illustrated by Rose Mary Santiago





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Shah, Idries, 1924-
The farmer's wife / by Idries Shah; illustrated by Rose Mary Santiago.
p. cm.

Summary: A cumulative tale of a farmer's wife who is trying to
retrieve an apple from a hole in the ground.

ISBN 1-883536-07-3

[1. Folklore.] I. Santiago, Rose Mary, ill. II. Title.

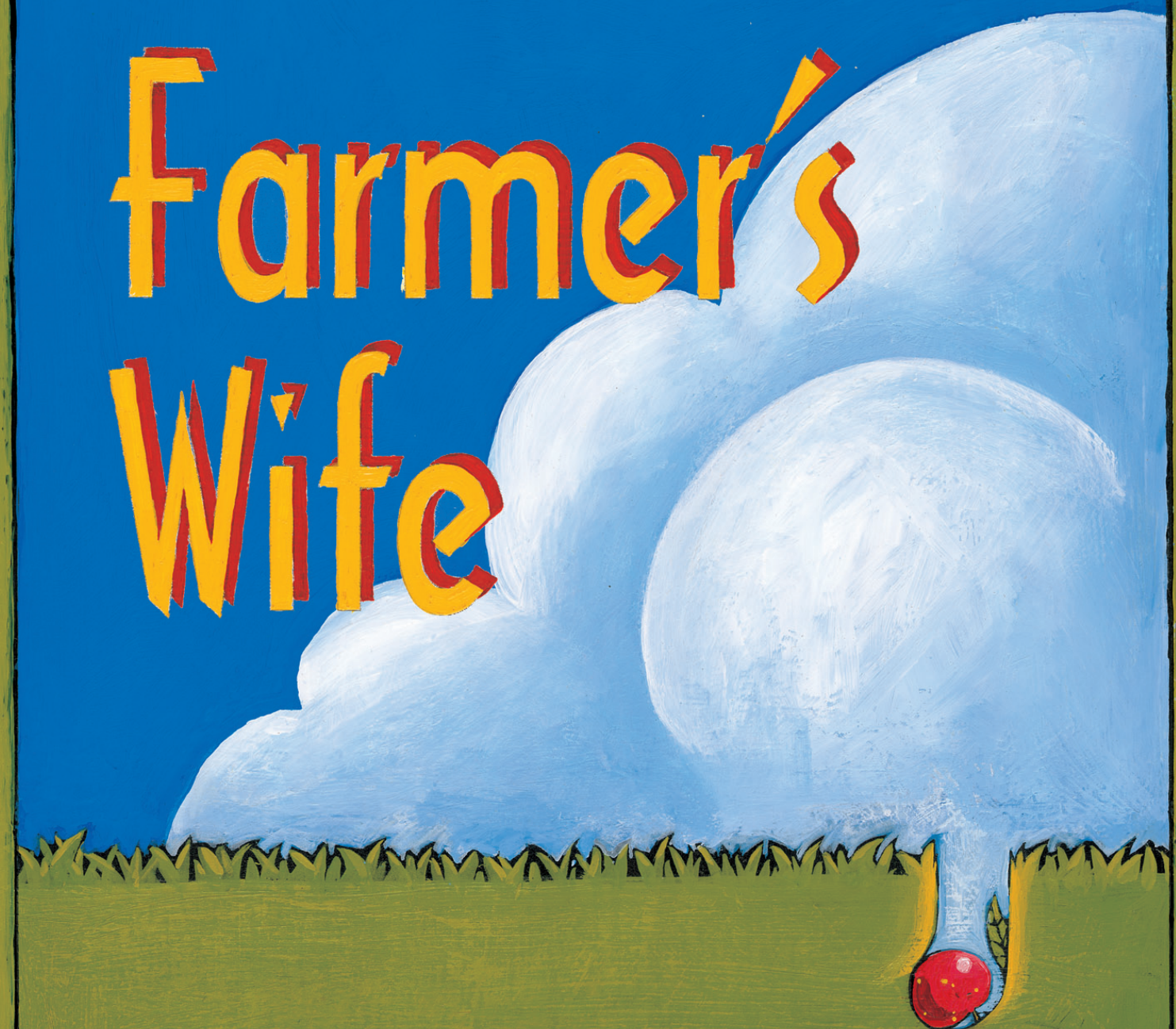
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The Farmer's Wife

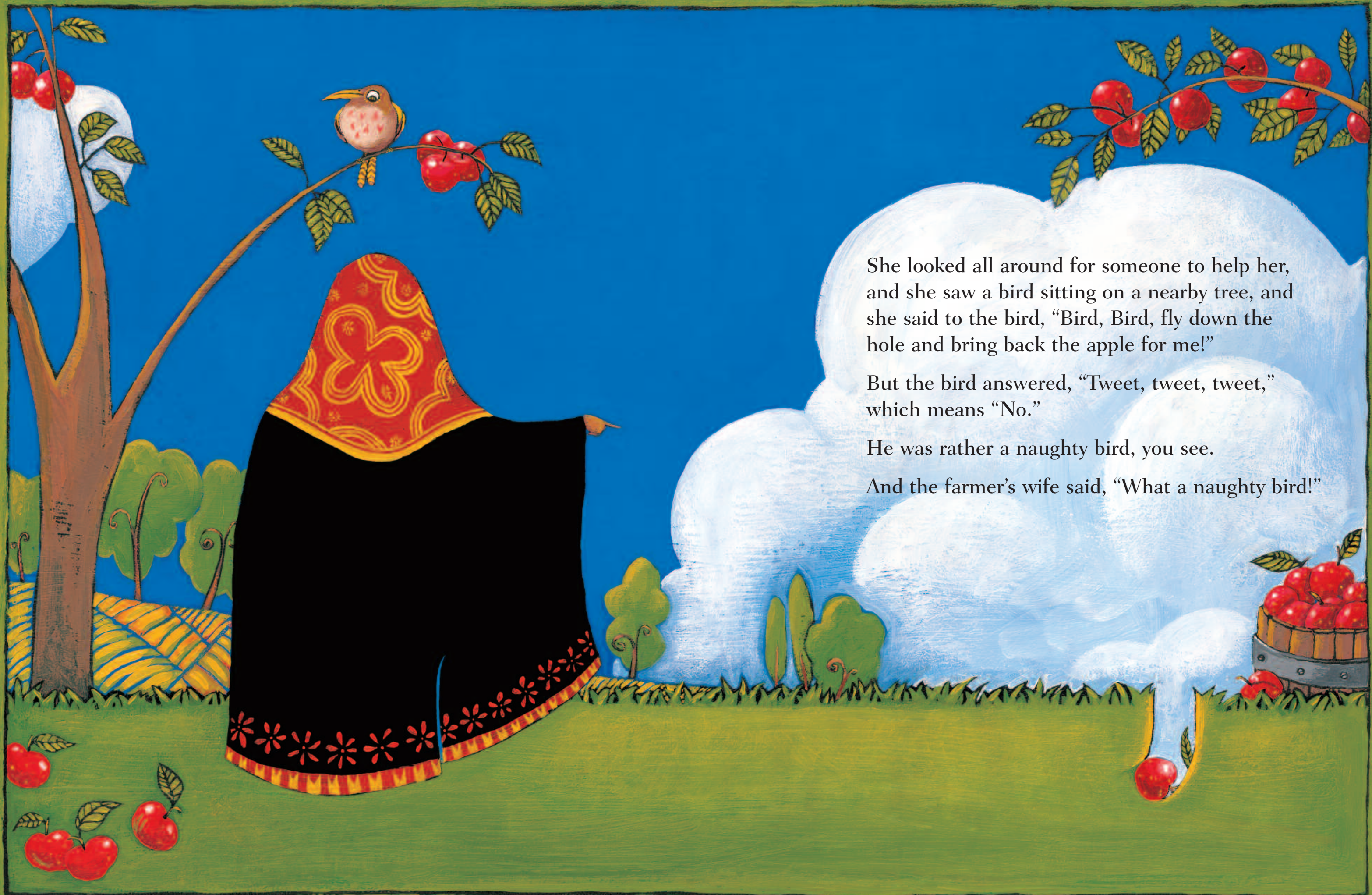




ONCE UPON A TIME
there was a farmer's wife.

One day when she was picking
apples from a tree, one of the
apples fell into a hole in the
ground and she couldn't get
it out.





She looked all around for someone to help her, and she saw a bird sitting on a nearby tree, and she said to the bird, "Bird, Bird, fly down the hole and bring back the apple for me!"

But the bird answered, "Tweet, tweet, tweet," which means "No."

He was rather a naughty bird, you see.

And the farmer's wife said, "What a naughty bird!"

And then she saw a cat, so she said to the cat, "Cat, Cat, jump at the bird until he flies down the hole and brings back the apple for me."

But the cat said, "Miaow, miaow," which means "No."

She was rather a naughty cat, you see.

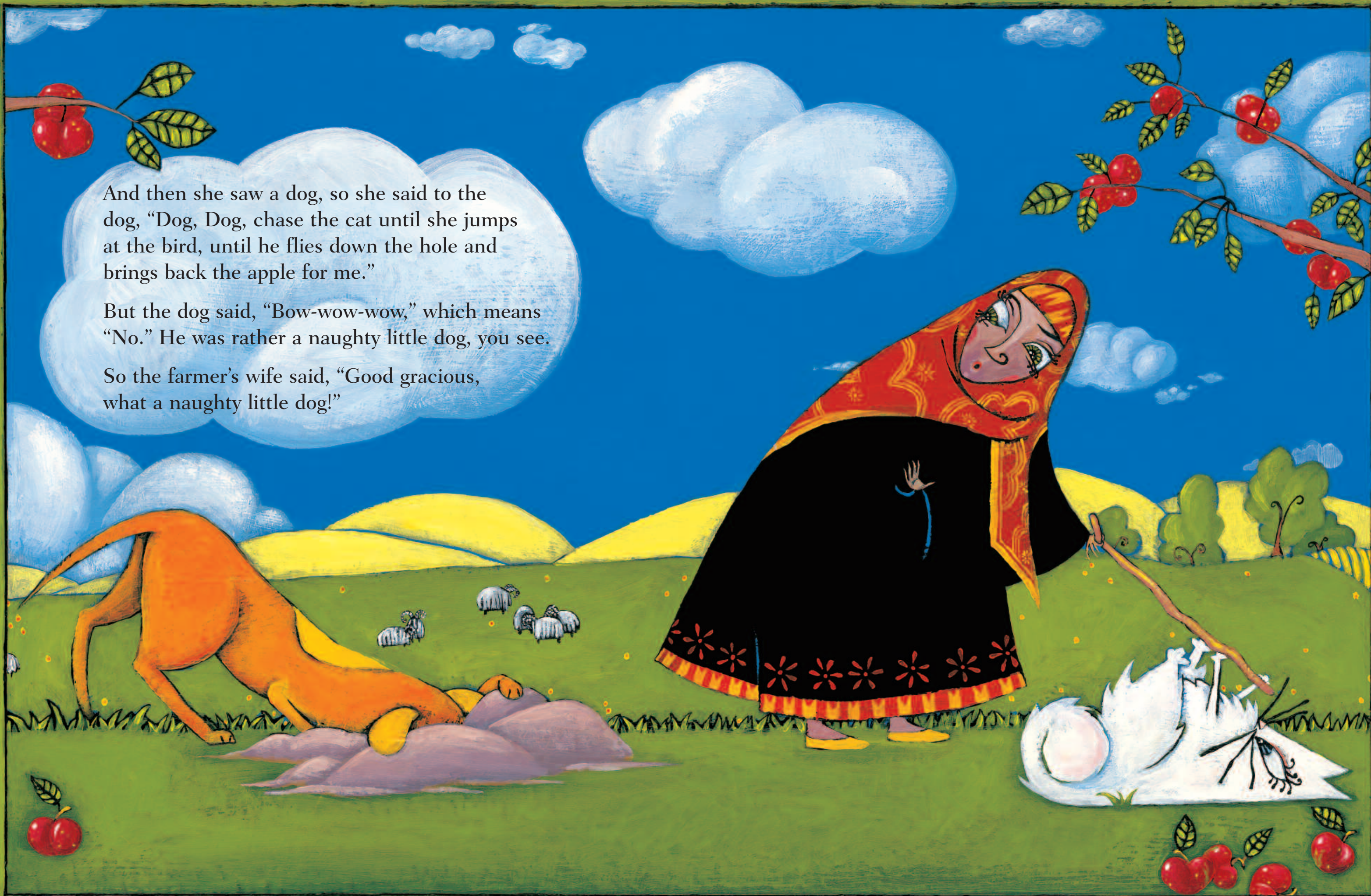
So the farmer's wife said, "What a naughty cat!"

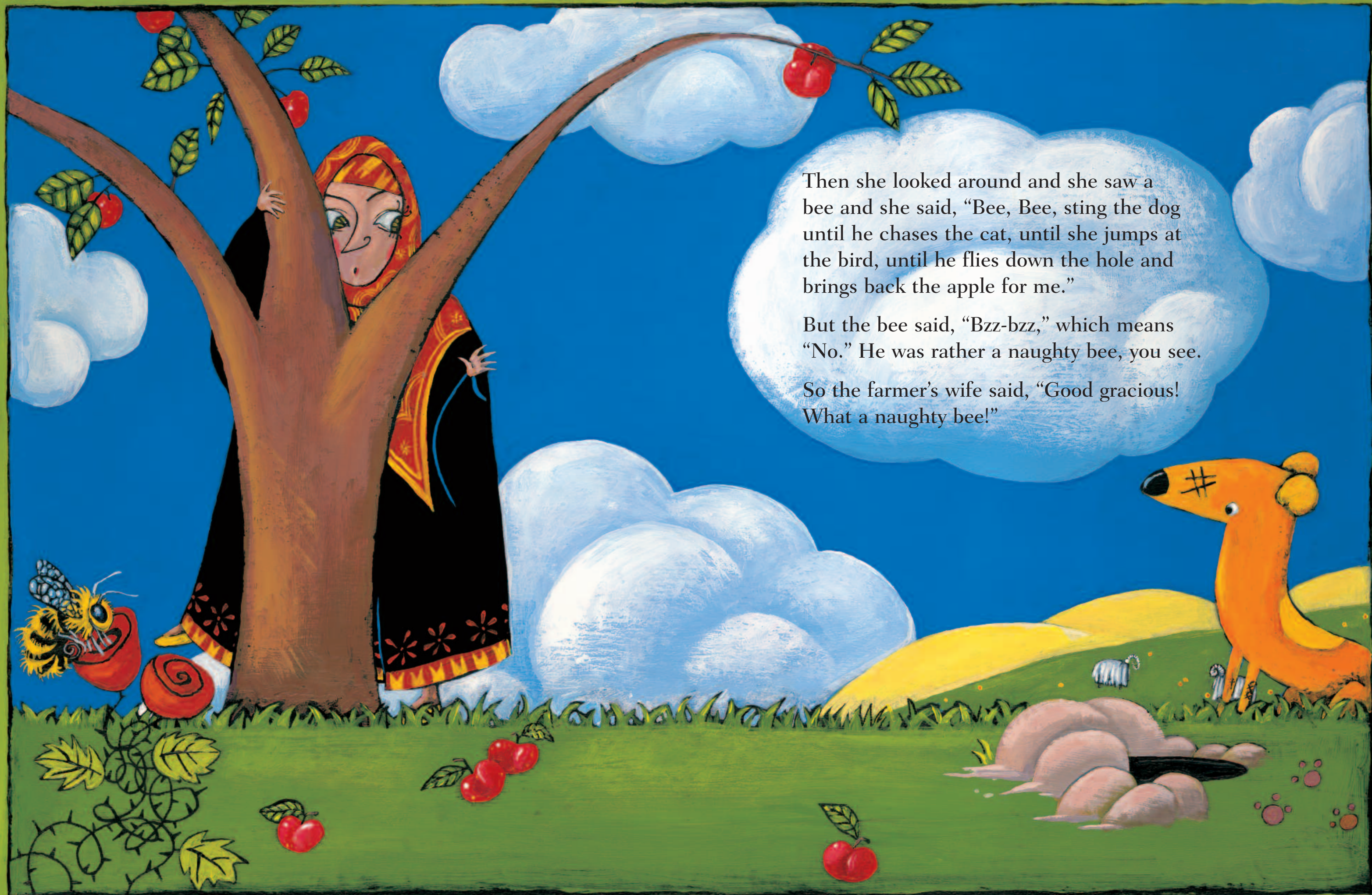


And then she saw a dog, so she said to the dog, "Dog, Dog, chase the cat until she jumps at the bird, until he flies down the hole and brings back the apple for me."

But the dog said, "Bow-wow-wow," which means "No." He was rather a naughty little dog, you see.

So the farmer's wife said, "Good gracious, what a naughty little dog!"





Then she looked around and she saw a bee and she said, "Bee, Bee, sting the dog until he chases the cat, until she jumps at the bird, until he flies down the hole and brings back the apple for me."

But the bee said, "Bzz-bzz," which means "No." He was rather a naughty bee, you see.


So the farmer's wife said, "Good gracious! What a naughty bee!"

Then she looked around and she saw a beekeeper, and she said to the beekeeper, "Beekeeper, Beekeeper, tell the bee to sting the dog, until he chases the cat, until she jumps at the bird, until he flies down the hole and brings back the apple for me."

And the beekeeper said, "No, I won't."

So, the farmer's wife said, "Good gracious! What a naughty beekeeper!"





And she looked around again. This time she saw a rope on the ground.

And she said, "Rope, Rope, tie up the beekeeper until he tells the bee to sting the dog, to chase the cat, to jump at the bird, to fly down the hole and bring back the apple for me."

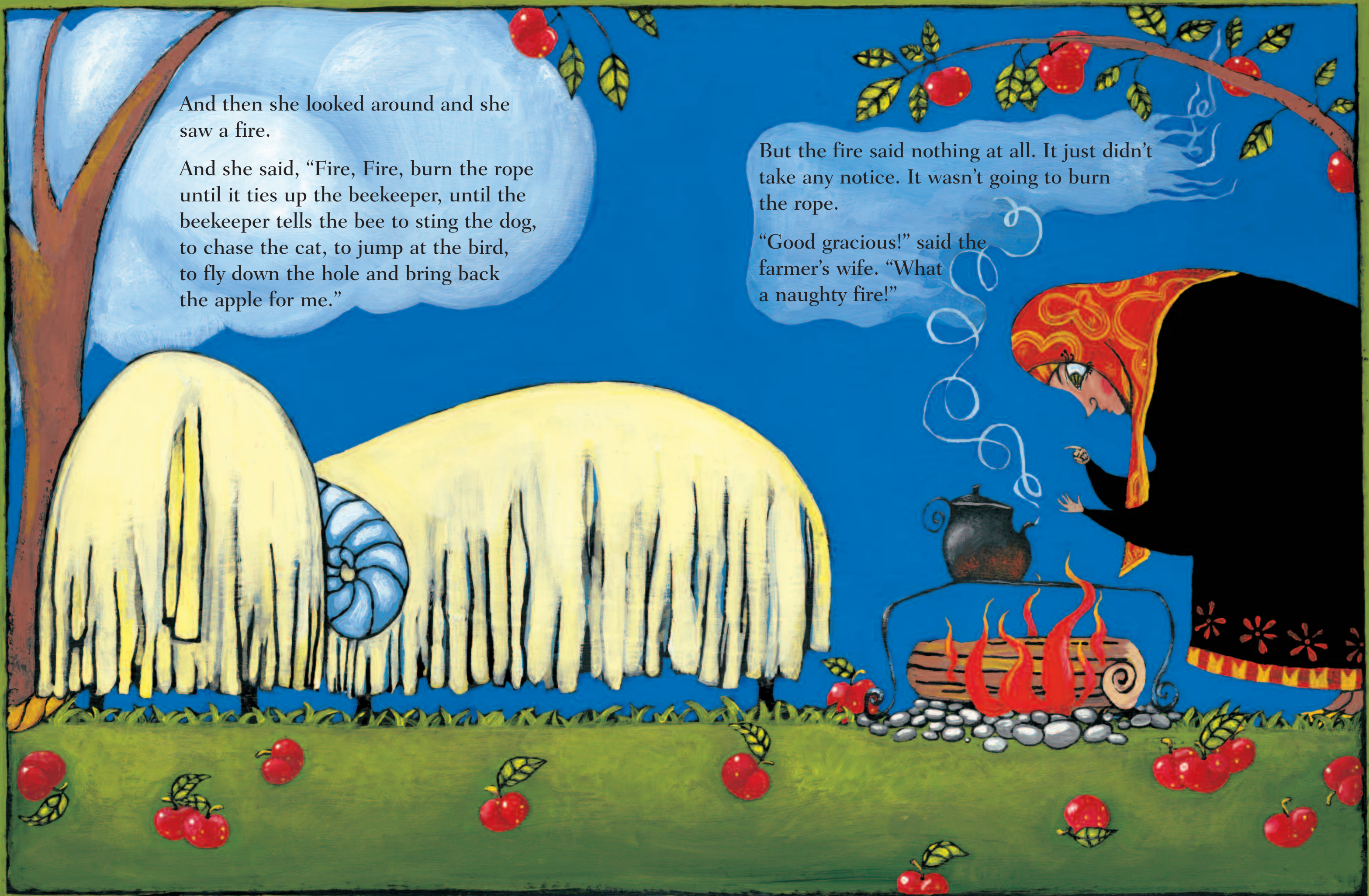
But the rope didn't take any notice at all. It just lay there. And the farmer's wife said, "Good gracious! What a naughty rope!"

And then she looked around and she saw a fire.

And she said, "Fire, Fire, burn the rope until it ties up the beekeeper, until the beekeeper tells the bee to sting the dog, to chase the cat, to jump at the bird, to fly down the hole and bring back the apple for me."

But the fire said nothing at all. It just didn't take any notice. It wasn't going to burn the rope.

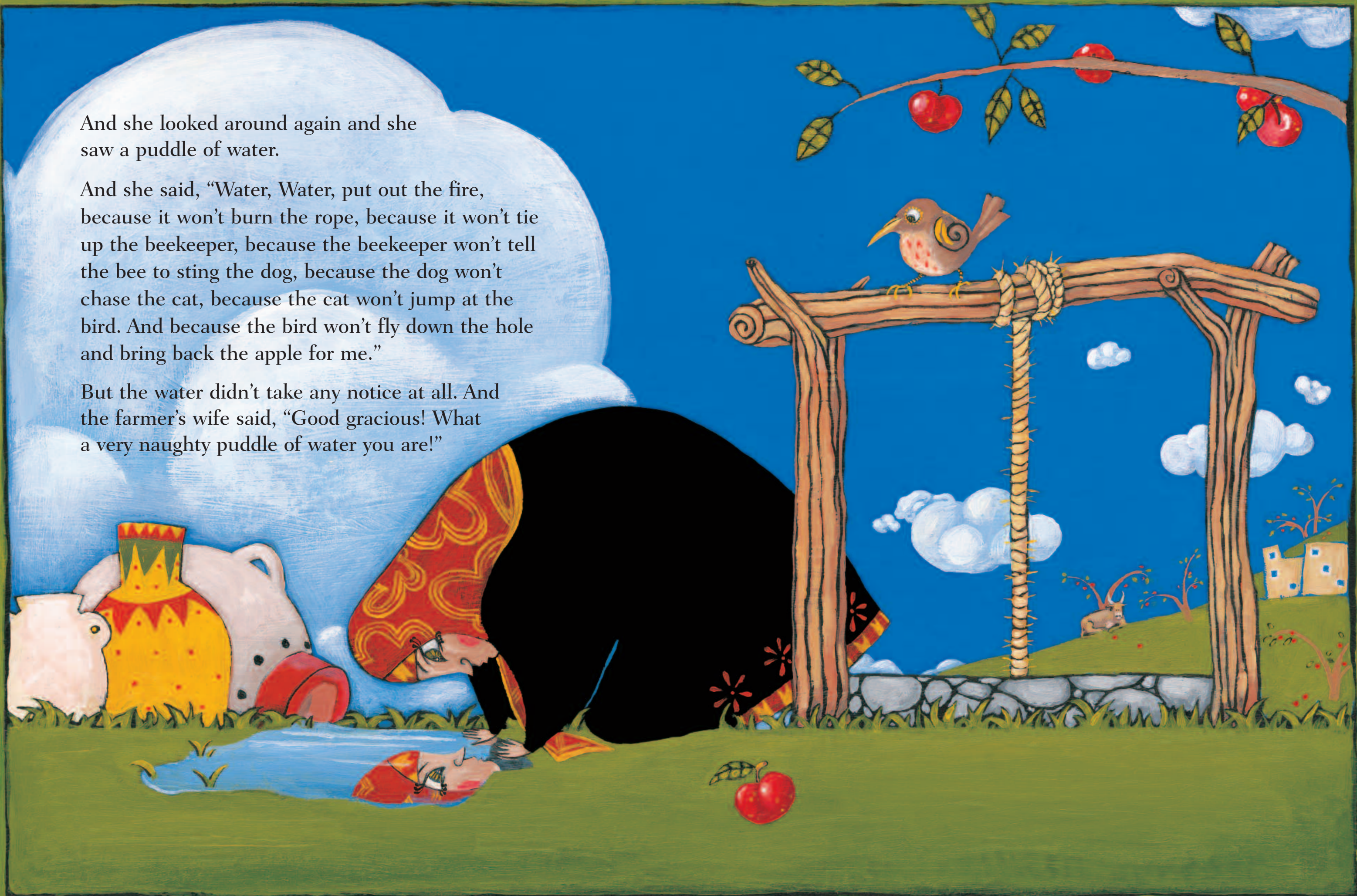
"Good gracious!" said the farmer's wife. "What a naughty fire!"

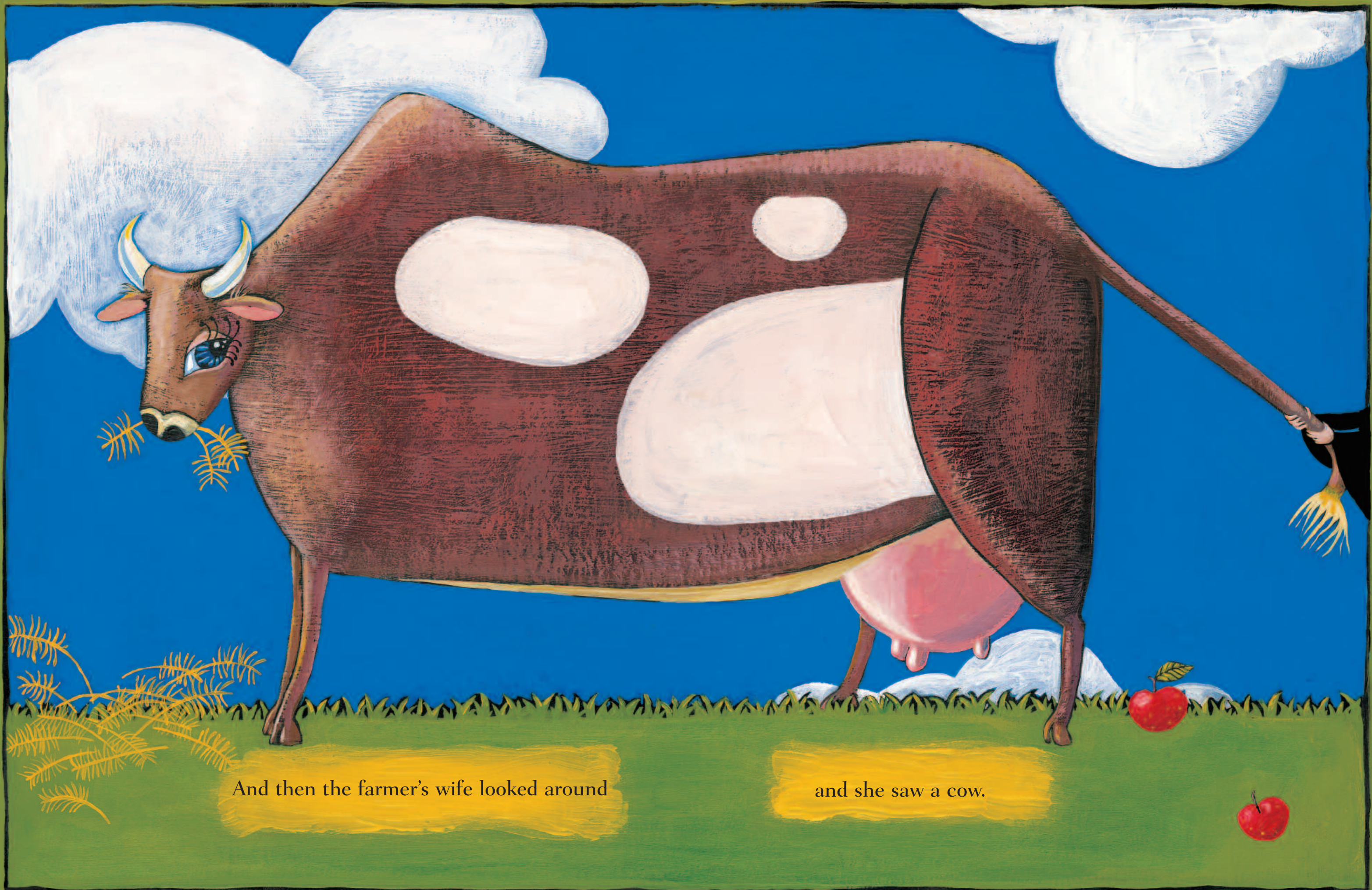


And she looked around again and she saw a puddle of water.

And she said, "Water, Water, put out the fire, because it won't burn the rope, because it won't tie up the beekeeper, because the beekeeper won't tell the bee to sting the dog, because the dog won't chase the cat, because the cat won't jump at the bird. And because the bird won't fly down the hole and bring back the apple for me."

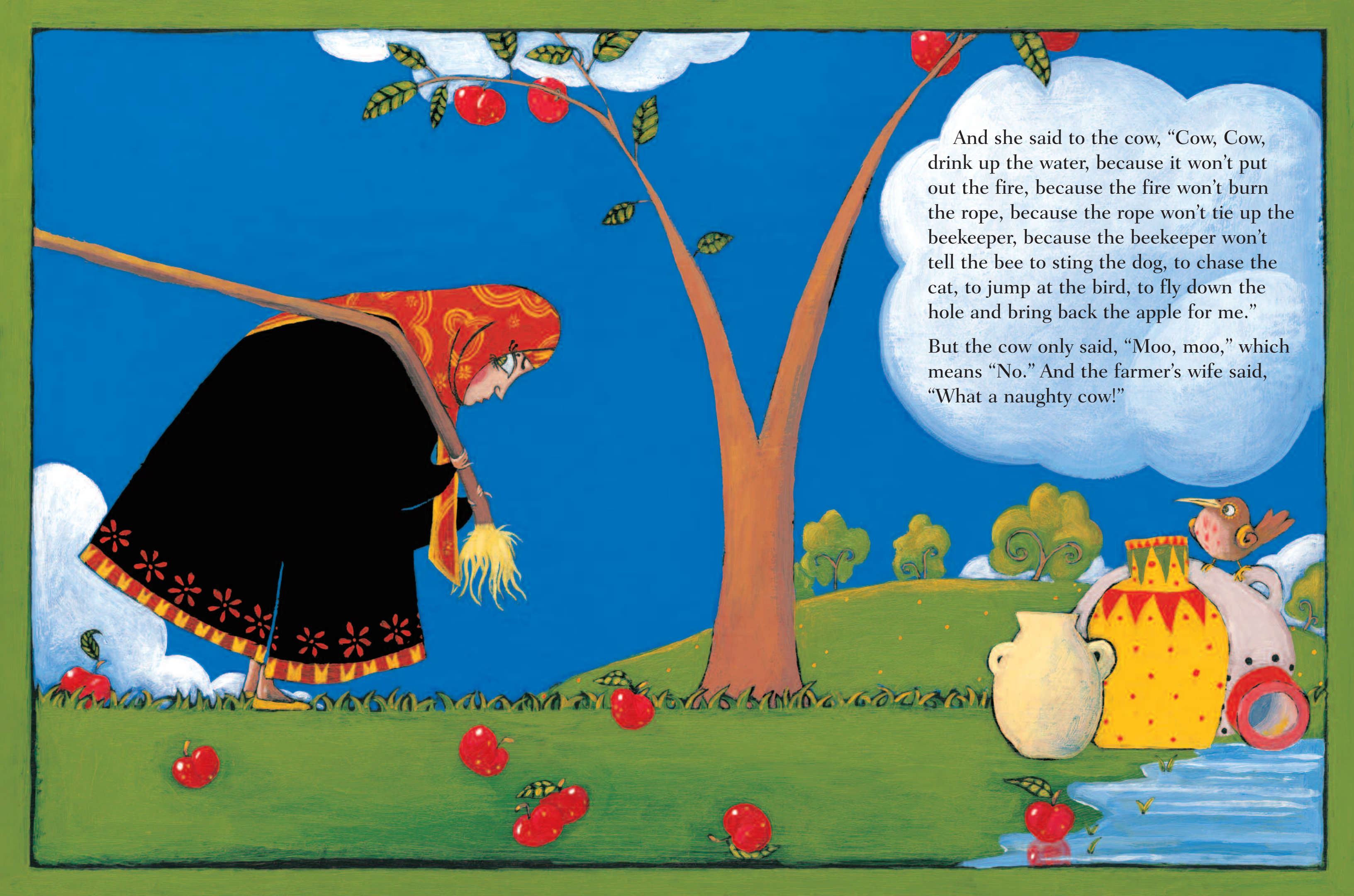
But the water didn't take any notice at all. And the farmer's wife said, "Good gracious! What a very naughty puddle of water you are!"





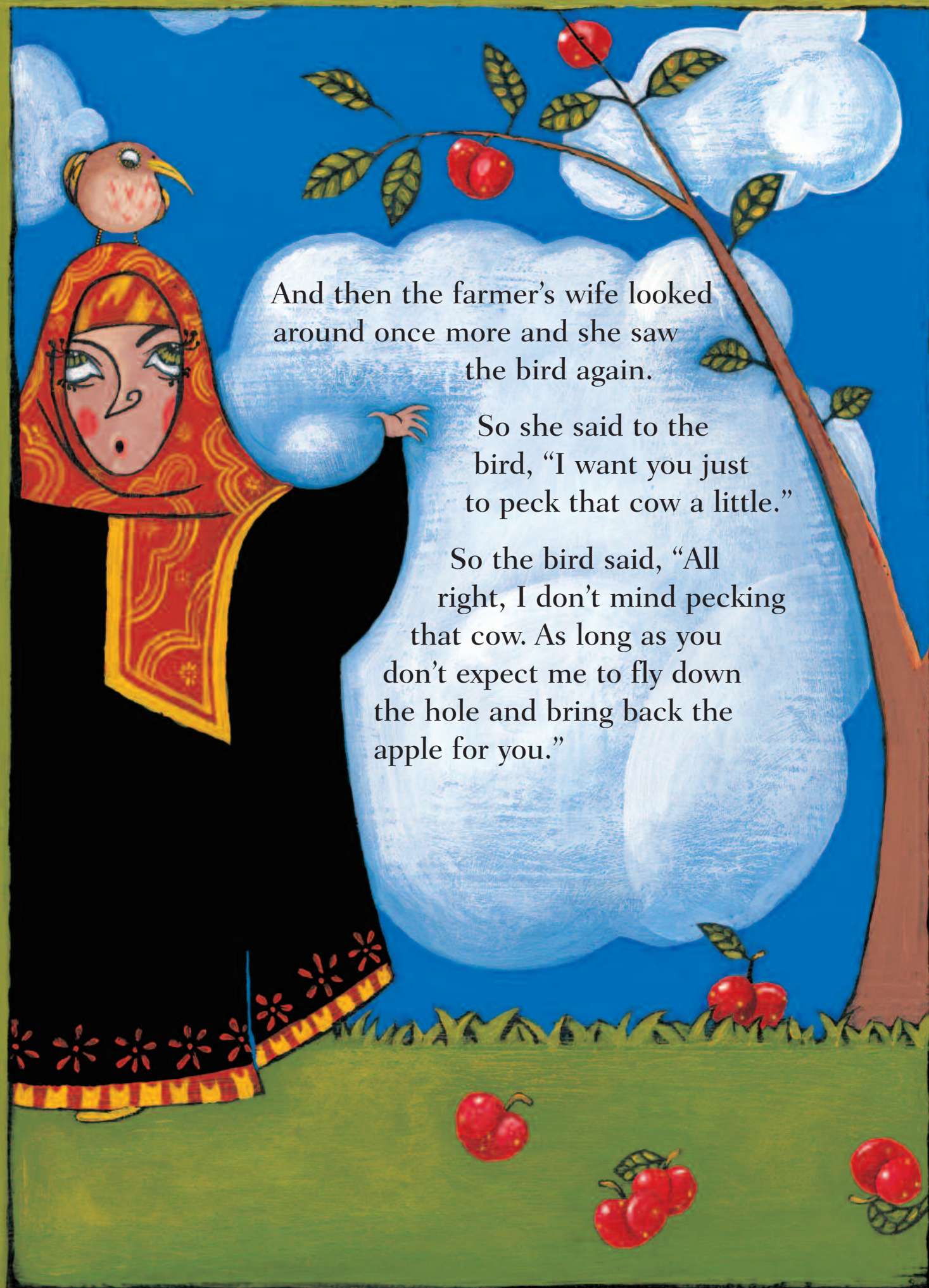
And then the farmer's wife looked around

and she saw a cow.



And she said to the cow, "Cow, Cow, drink up the water, because it won't put out the fire, because the fire won't burn the rope, because the rope won't tie up the beekeeper, because the beekeeper won't tell the bee to sting the dog, to chase the cat, to jump at the bird, to fly down the hole and bring back the apple for me."

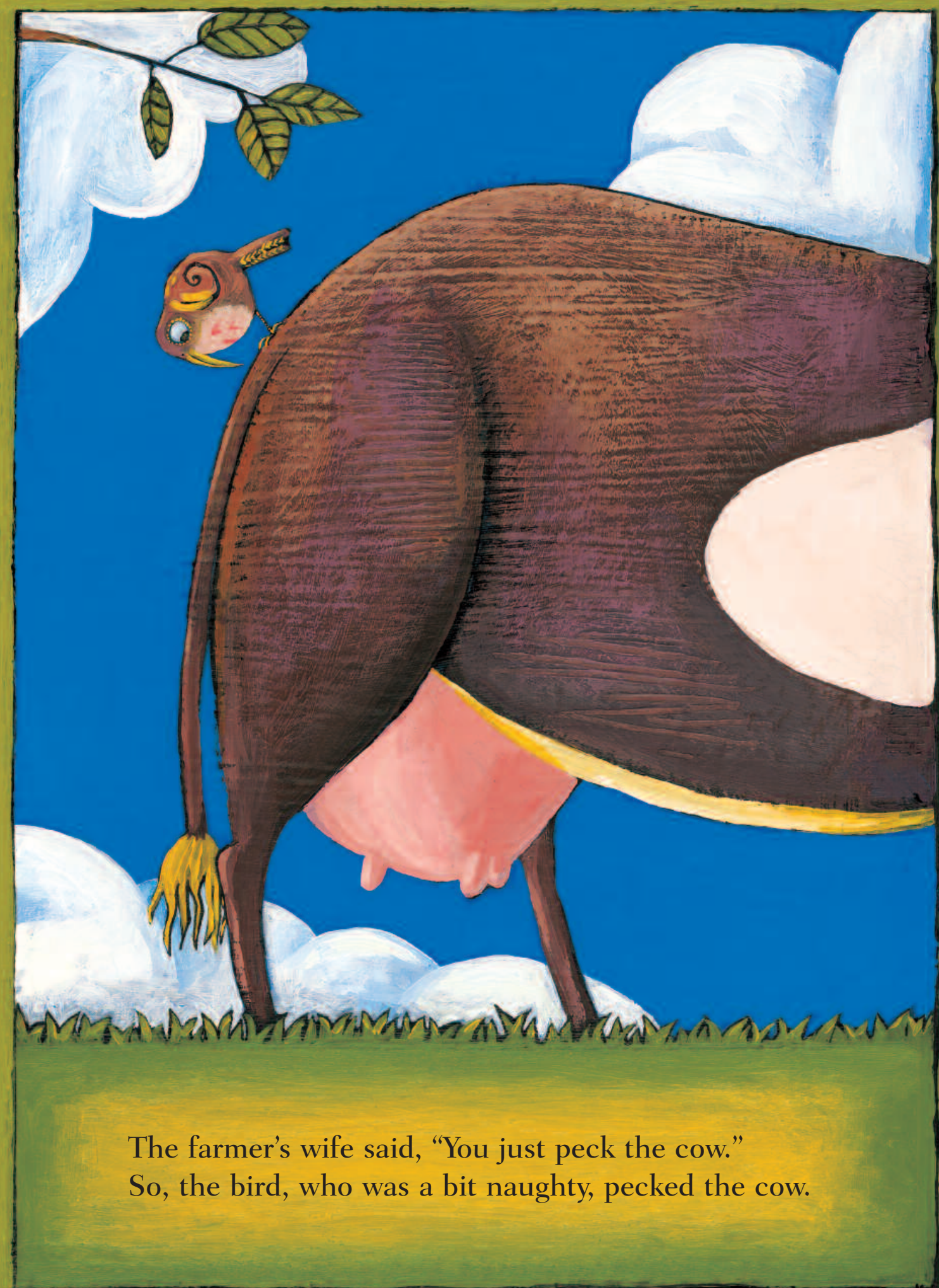
But the cow only said, "Moo, moo," which means "No." And the farmer's wife said, "What a naughty cow!"



And then the farmer's wife looked around once more and she saw the bird again.

So she said to the bird, "I want you just to peck that cow a little."

So the bird said, "All right, I don't mind pecking that cow. As long as you don't expect me to fly down the hole and bring back the apple for you."



The farmer's wife said, "You just peck the cow."
So, the bird, who was a bit naughty, pecked the cow.



And the cow started to drink up the water,
and the water started to put out the fire,

and the fire started to burn the rope, and
the rope started to tie up the beekeeper,

and the beekeeper started to tell the bee,
and the bee started to sting the dog, and
the dog started to chase the cat, and the
cat started to jump at that very same bird
that had pecked the cow.





And then the wind flew down the hole and

brought back the apple for the farmer's wife.



And everyone lived happily ever after.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

Fatima the Spinner and the Tent
 The Man with Bad Manners
 The Man and the Fox
 The Old Woman and the Eagle
 The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
 The Silly Chicken
 The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
 Neem the Half-Boy
 The Boy Without A Name
 The Magic Horse
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 The Sufis
 The Way of the Sufi
 Tales of the Dervishes
 The Book of the Book
 Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
 The Commanding Self
 Knowing How to Know



Fatima's life is beset with what seem to be disasters. Her journey leads her from Morocco to the Mediterranean, Egypt, Turkey and, finally, to China. It is in China that she realizes that what seemed at the time to be really unfortunate events were an integral part of her eventual fulfillment.

This Teaching-Story is well known in Greek folklore, but this version is attributed to Sheikh Mohamed Jamaludin of Adrianople (modern-day Edirne) in Turkey who died in 1750. It was first published by Idries Shah in 1967 in his classic work, *Tales of the Dervishes, Teaching-Stories of the Sufi Masters over the past thousand years*.

In the Sufi tradition there is a continuum between the children's story, the entertainment or folklore story, and the instructional or instrumental story. A story can help children deal with difficult situations and give them something to hold on to. It can, at the same time, stimulate a deeper understanding in adults.

For more than 30 years, Idries Shah collected such stories and made them available to contemporary Western culture where psychologists and educators commend them for their ability to help foster mental flexibility and insight in people of all ages.

Natasha Delmar lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area. This is her second book in this series, the first one is the bestselling *The Old Woman and the Eagle*.

Idries Shah / Delmar

Fatima The Spinner and The Tent



FATIMA THE SPINNER AND THE TENT

BY IDRIES SHAH



Illustrated by
Natasha Delmar





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The original version of *Fatima the Spinner and the Tent* was published in 1967 in *Tales of the Dervishes* by Idries Shah

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Fatima The Spinner and The Tent

written by

IDRIES SHAH

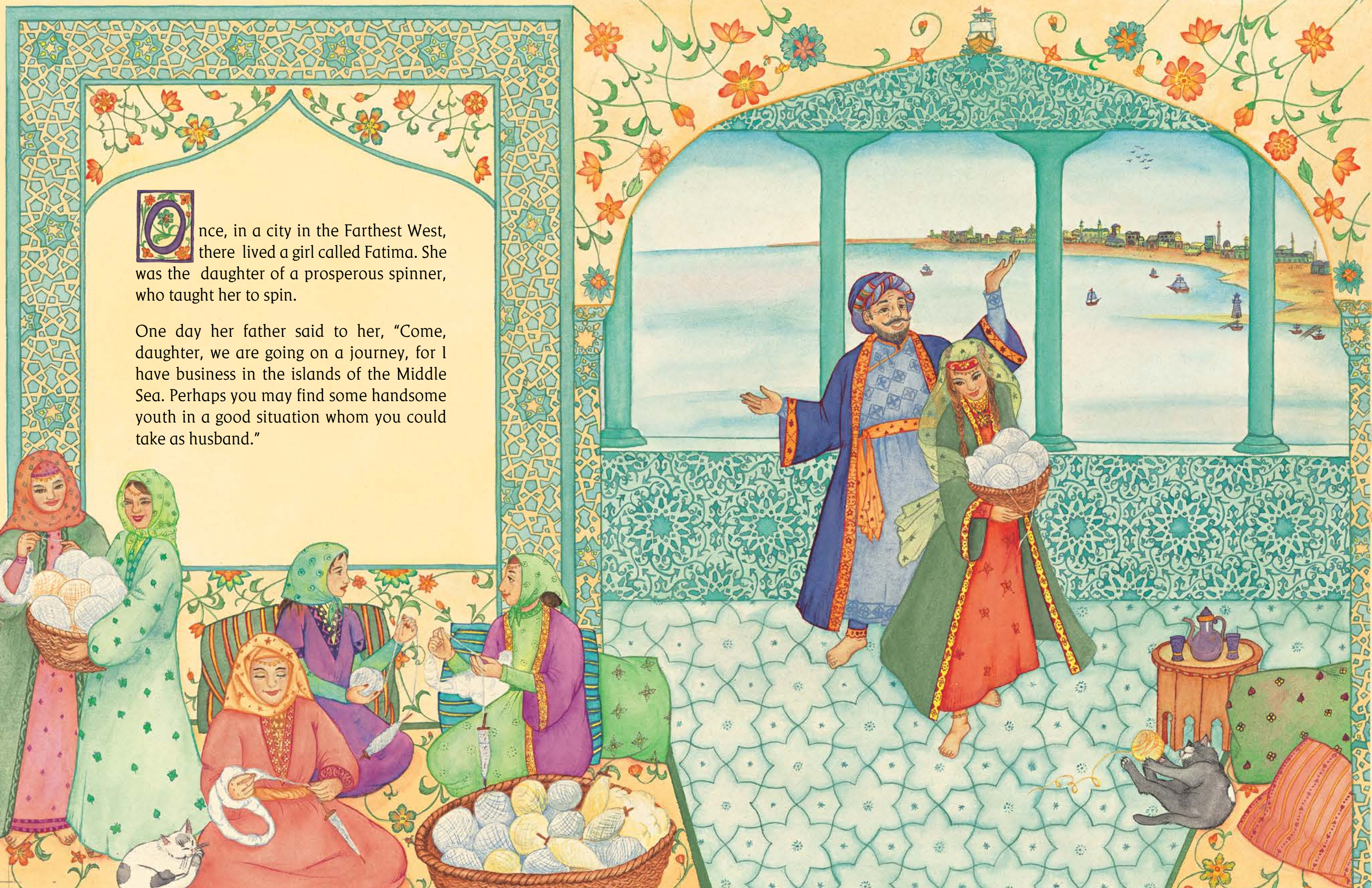


HOPOE BOOKS



nce, in a city in the Farthest West, there lived a girl called Fatima. She was the daughter of a prosperous spinner, who taught her to spin.

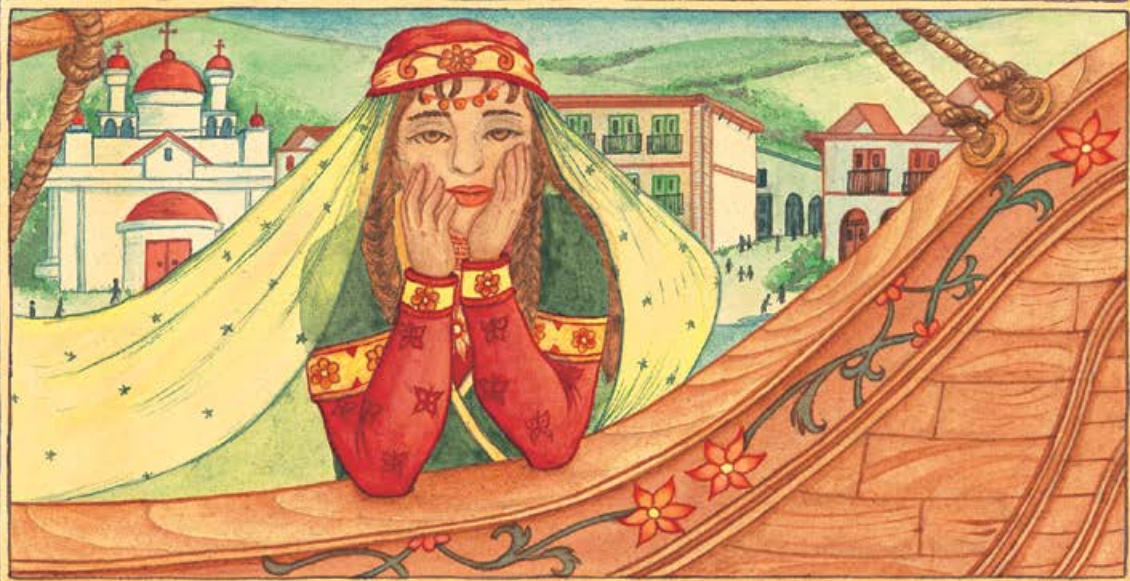
One day her father said to her, "Come, daughter, we are going on a journey, for I have business in the islands of the Middle Sea. Perhaps you may find some handsome youth in a good situation whom you could take as husband."





They set off and traveled from island to island, the father doing his trading while Fatima dreamt of the husband who might soon be hers.

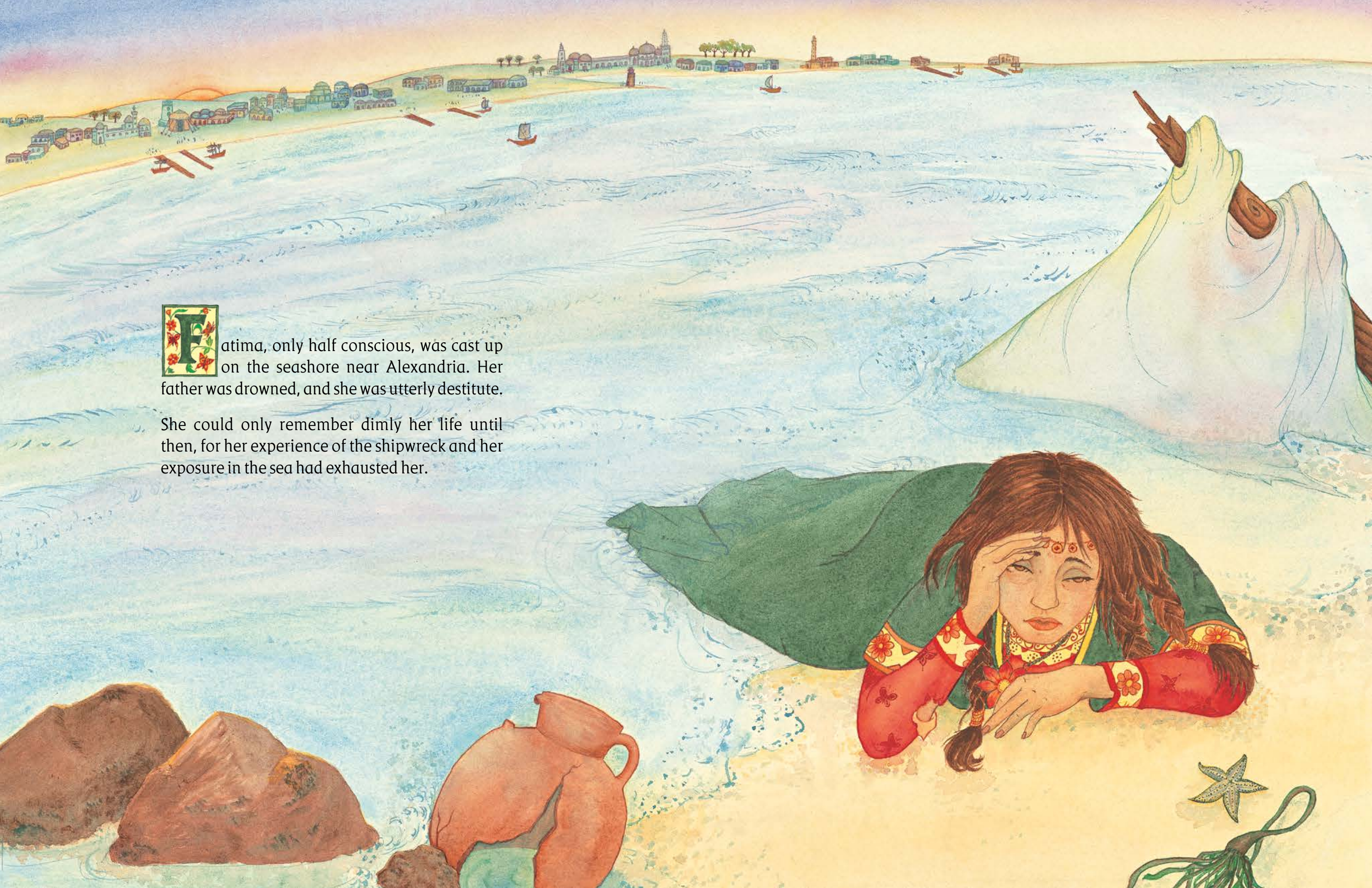
One day, however, they were on the way to Crete when a storm blew up, and the ship was wrecked.

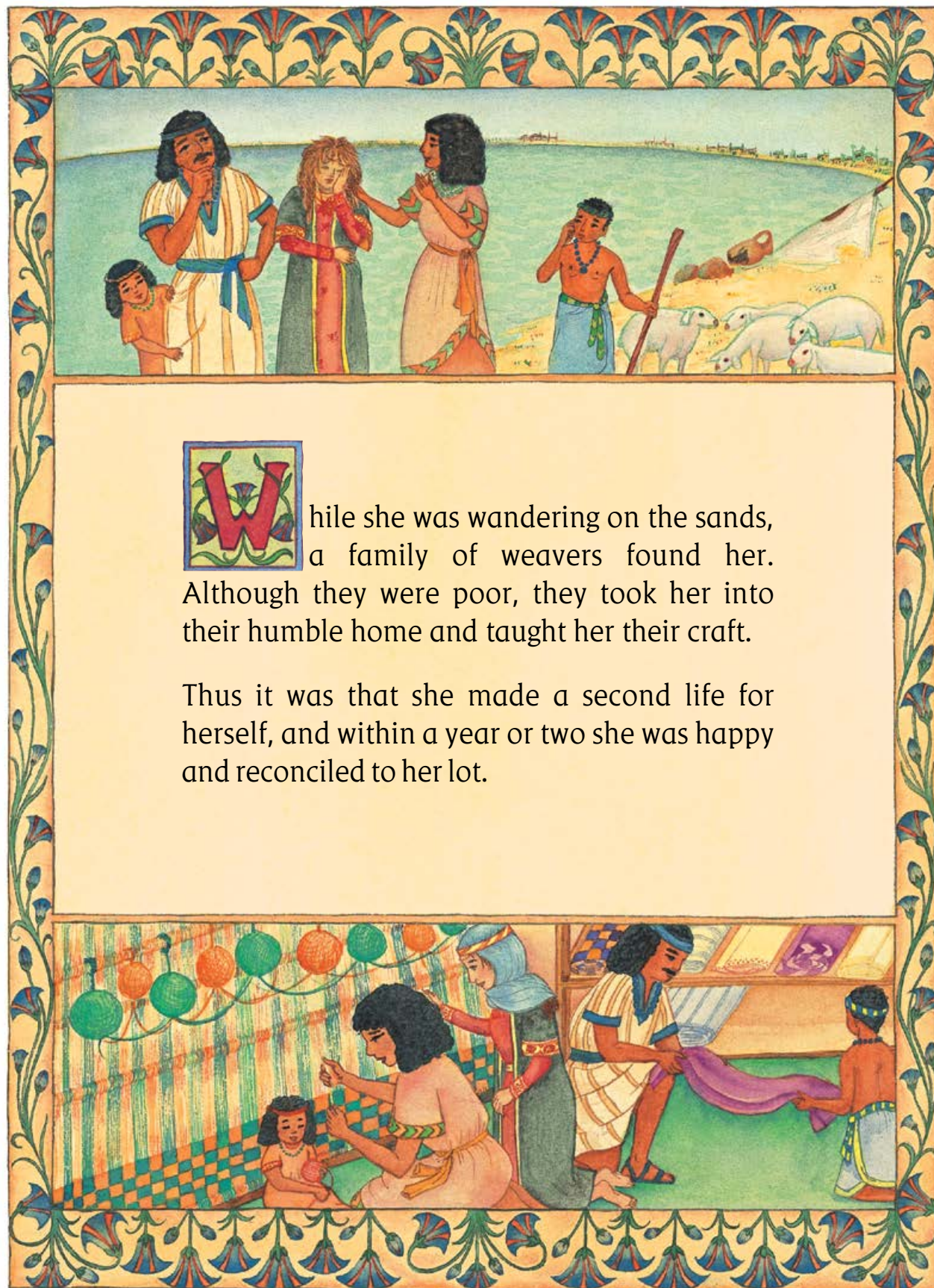




Fatima, only half conscious, was cast up on the seashore near Alexandria. Her father was drowned, and she was utterly destitute.

She could only remember dimly her life until then, for her experience of the shipwreck and her exposure in the sea had exhausted her.

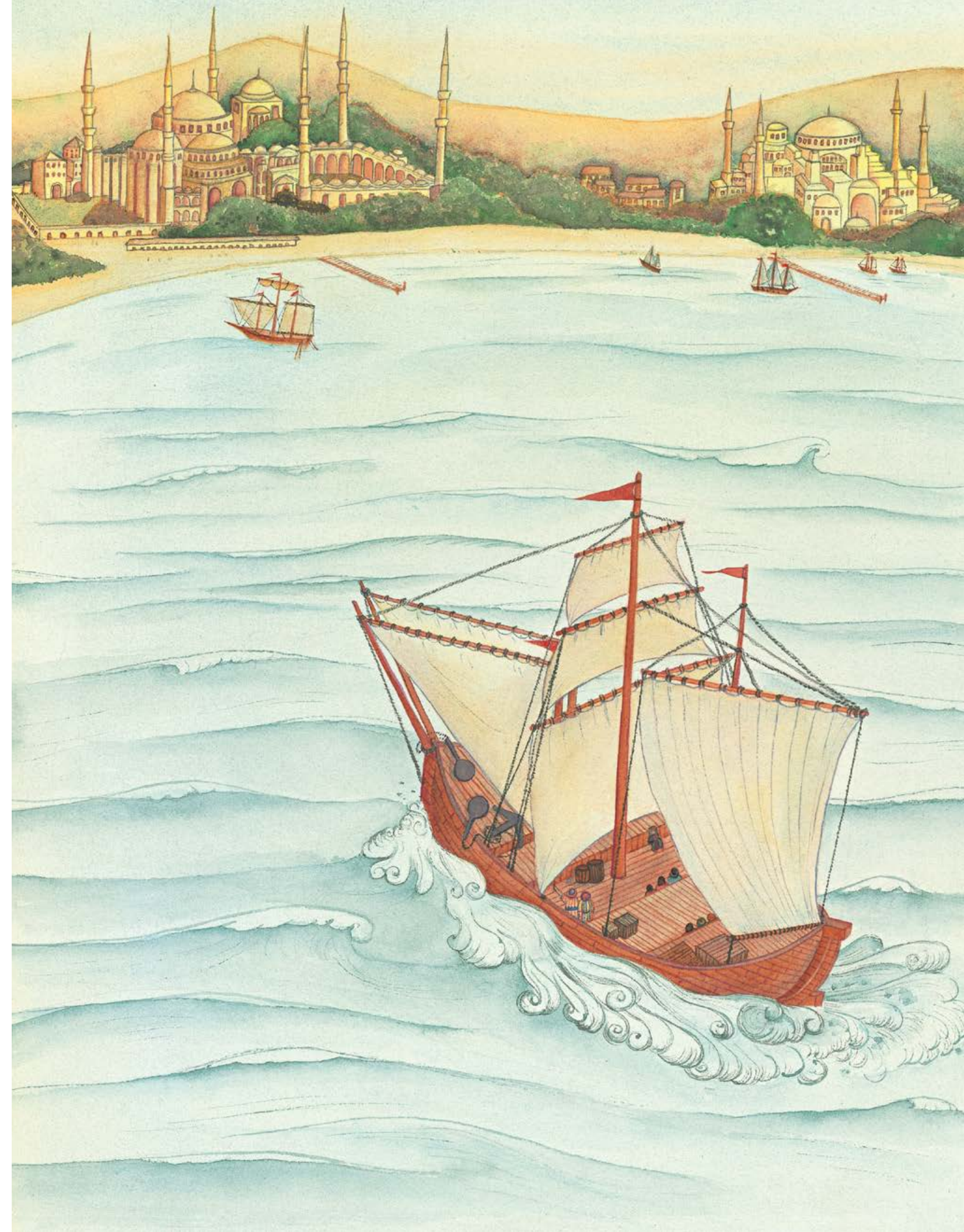
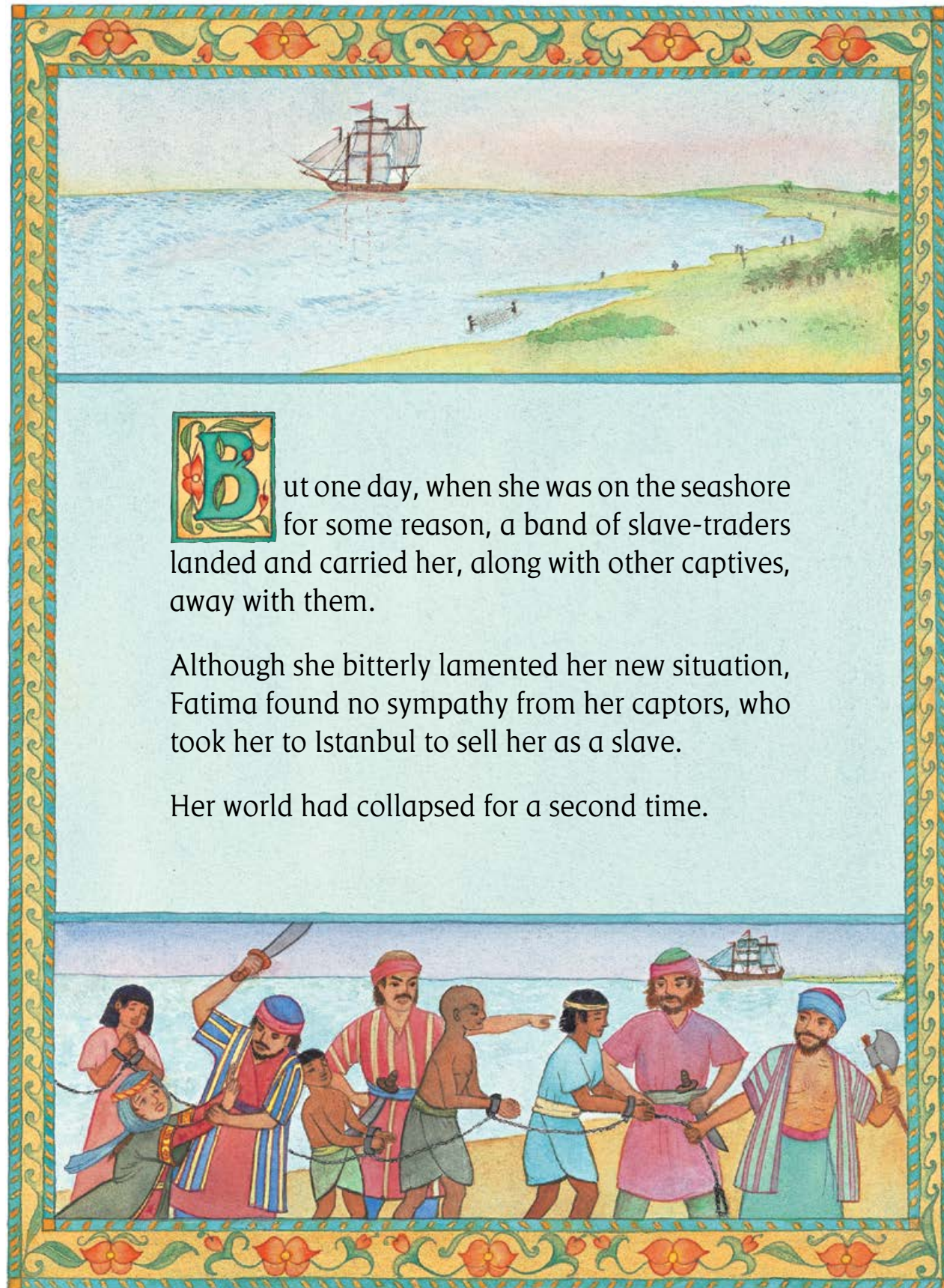


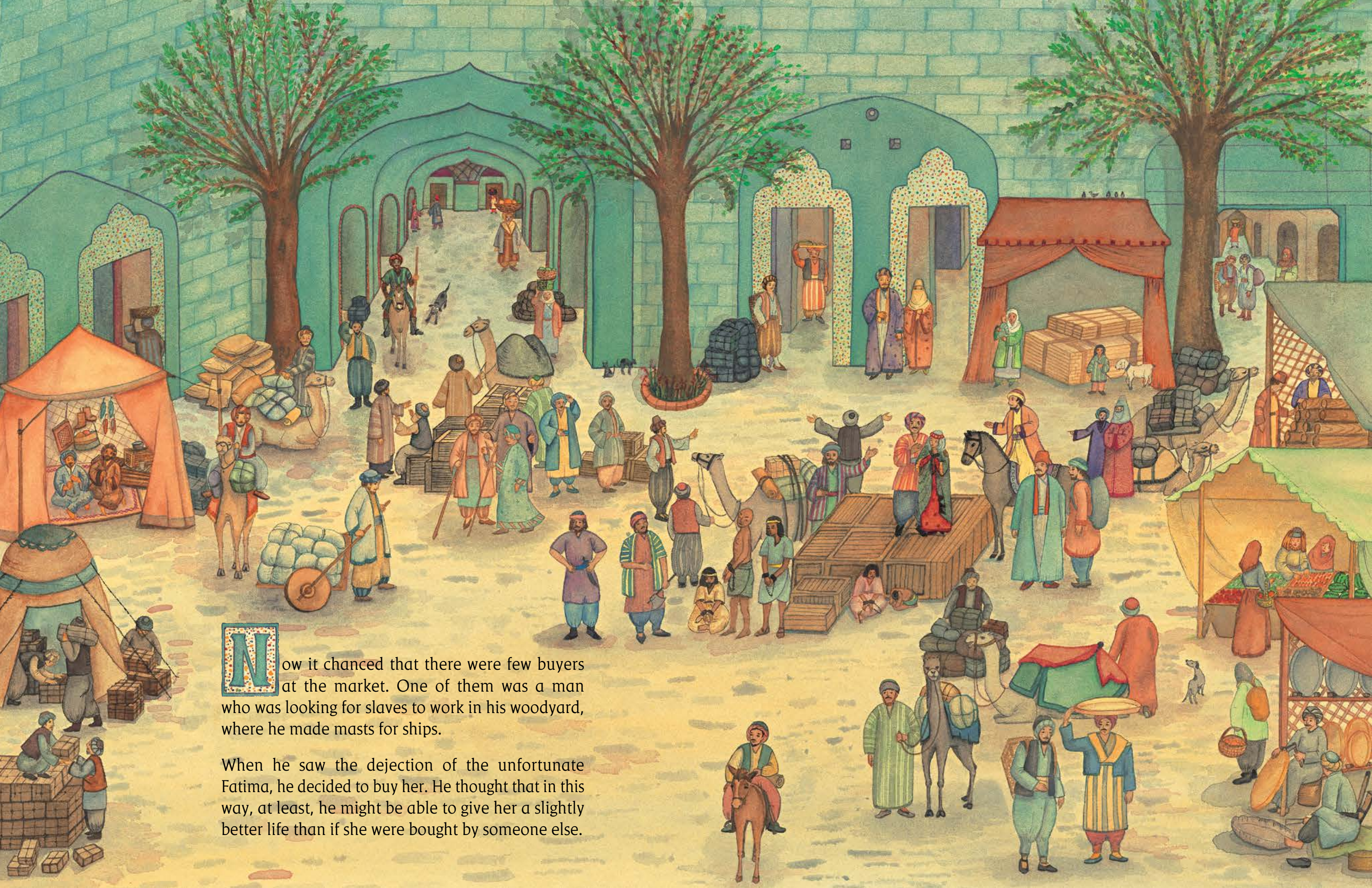


While she was wandering on the sands, a family of weavers found her. Although they were poor, they took her into their humble home and taught her their craft.

Thus it was that she made a second life for herself, and within a year or two she was happy and reconciled to her lot.







Now it chanced that there were few buyers at the market. One of them was a man who was looking for slaves to work in his woodyard, where he made masts for ships.

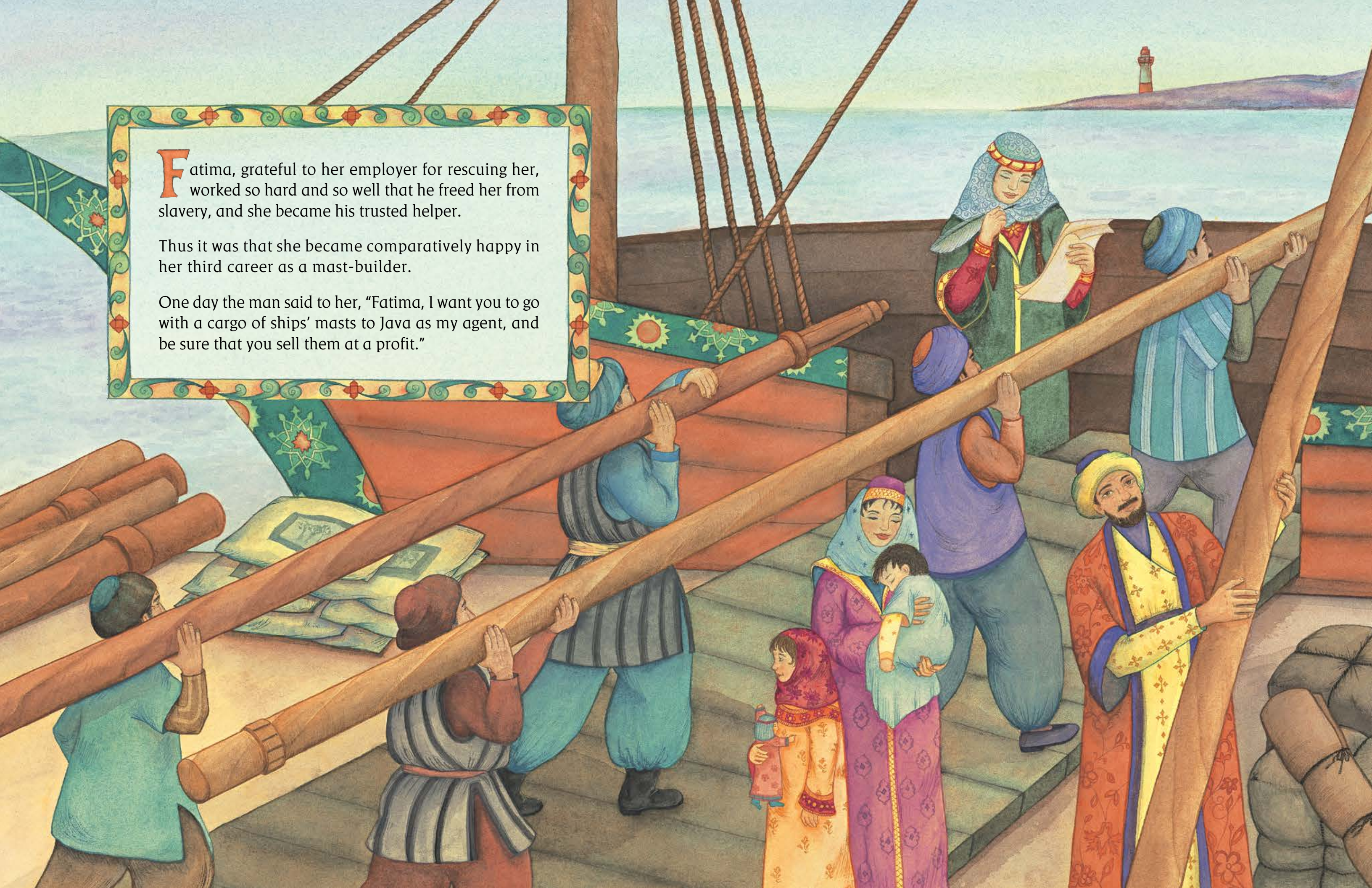
When he saw the dejection of the unfortunate Fatima, he decided to buy her. He thought that in this way, at least, he might be able to give her a slightly better life than if she were bought by someone else.



He took Fatima to his home, intending to make her a serving-maid for his wife.

When he arrived at the house, however, he found that he had lost all his money in a ship's cargo which had been captured by pirates. He could not afford workers, so he, Fatima and his wife were left alone to work at the heavy labor of making masts.



A colorful illustration of a ship's deck. Several men in traditional Middle Eastern or North African clothing are carrying large wooden masts across the deck. A woman in a purple dress and blue headscarf is carrying a small child. Another woman in a green dress and blue headscarf is standing near the masts. The ship's rigging and ropes are visible in the background. The scene is set on a ship, with the sea and a lighthouse visible in the distance.

Fatima, grateful to her employer for rescuing her, worked so hard and so well that he freed her from slavery, and she became his trusted helper.

Thus it was that she became comparatively happy in her third career as a mast-builder.

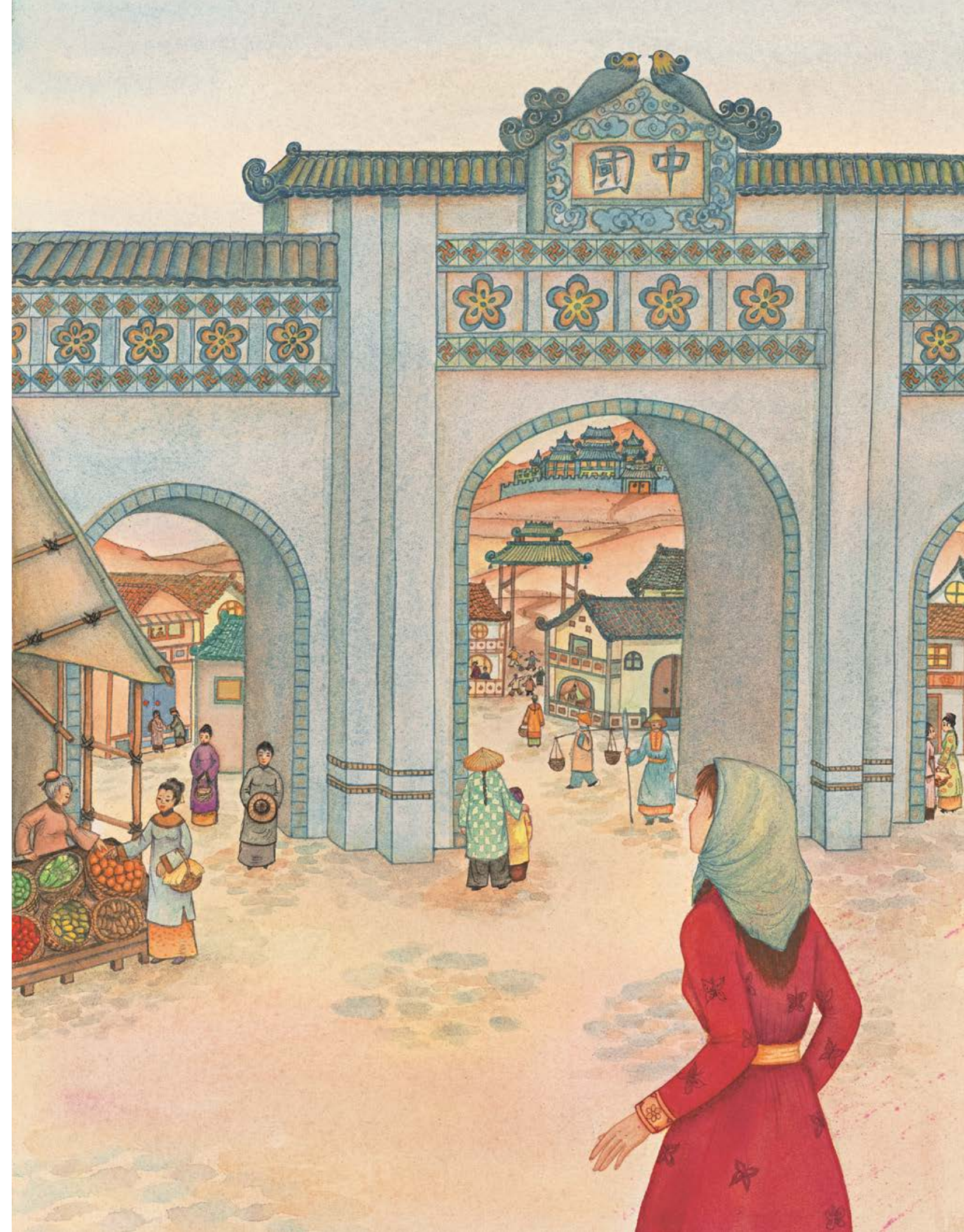
One day the man said to her, "Fatima, I want you to go with a cargo of ships' masts to Java as my agent, and be sure that you sell them at a profit."

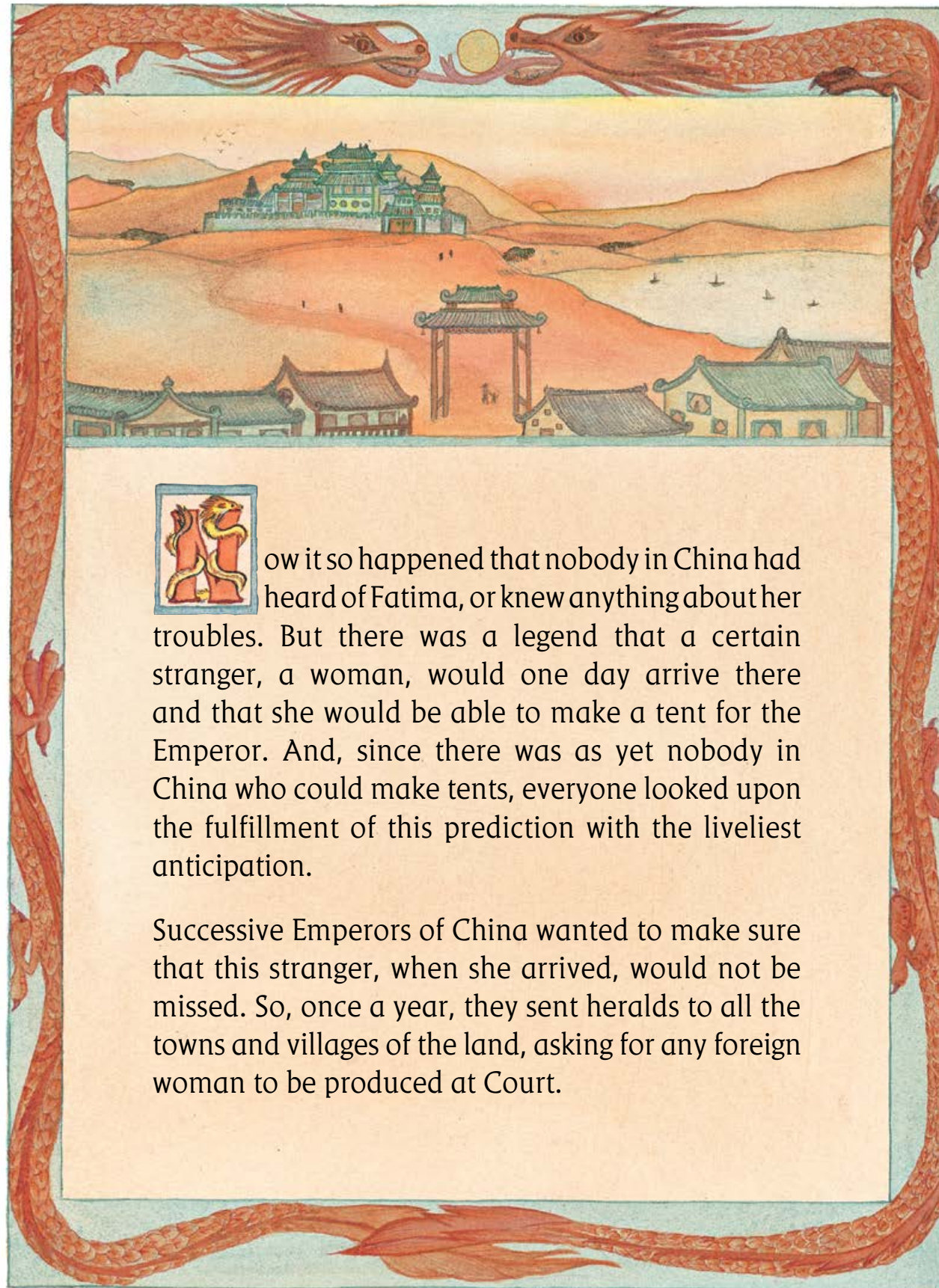
She set off, but when the ship was off the coast of China, a typhoon wrecked it, and Fatima found herself once again cast up on the seashore of a strange land.

She wept bitterly, for she felt that nothing in her life was working in accordance with expectation. Whenever things seemed to be going well, something came and destroyed all her hopes.

"Why is it," she cried out, "that whenever I try to do something it comes to grief? Why should so many unfortunate things happen to me?" But there was no answer.

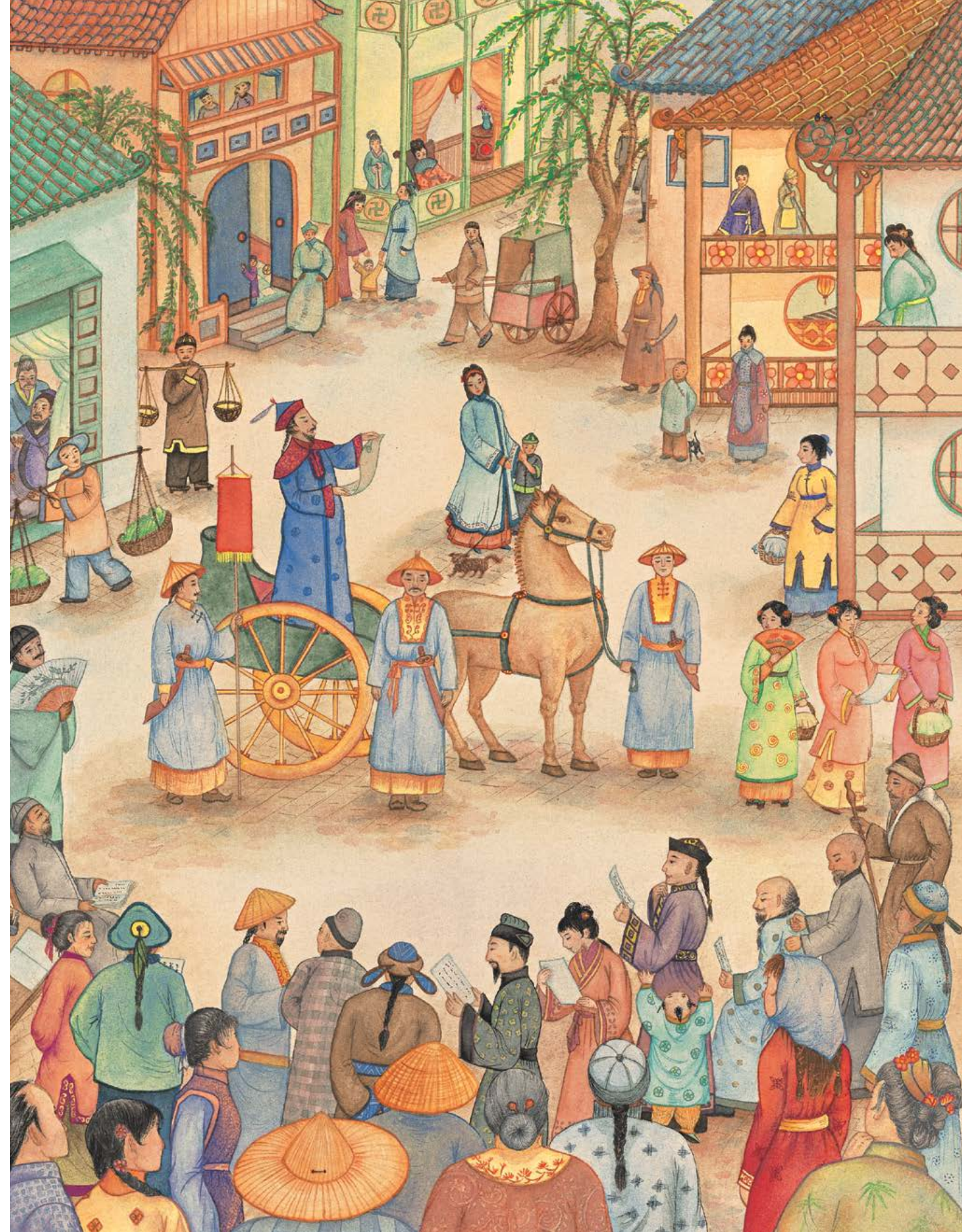
So, she picked herself up from the sand and started to walk inland.





Now it so happened that nobody in China had heard of Fatima, or knew anything about her troubles. But there was a legend that a certain stranger, a woman, would one day arrive there and that she would be able to make a tent for the Emperor. And, since there was as yet nobody in China who could make tents, everyone looked upon the fulfillment of this prediction with the liveliest anticipation.

Successive Emperors of China wanted to make sure that this stranger, when she arrived, would not be missed. So, once a year, they sent heralds to all the towns and villages of the land, asking for any foreign woman to be produced at Court.

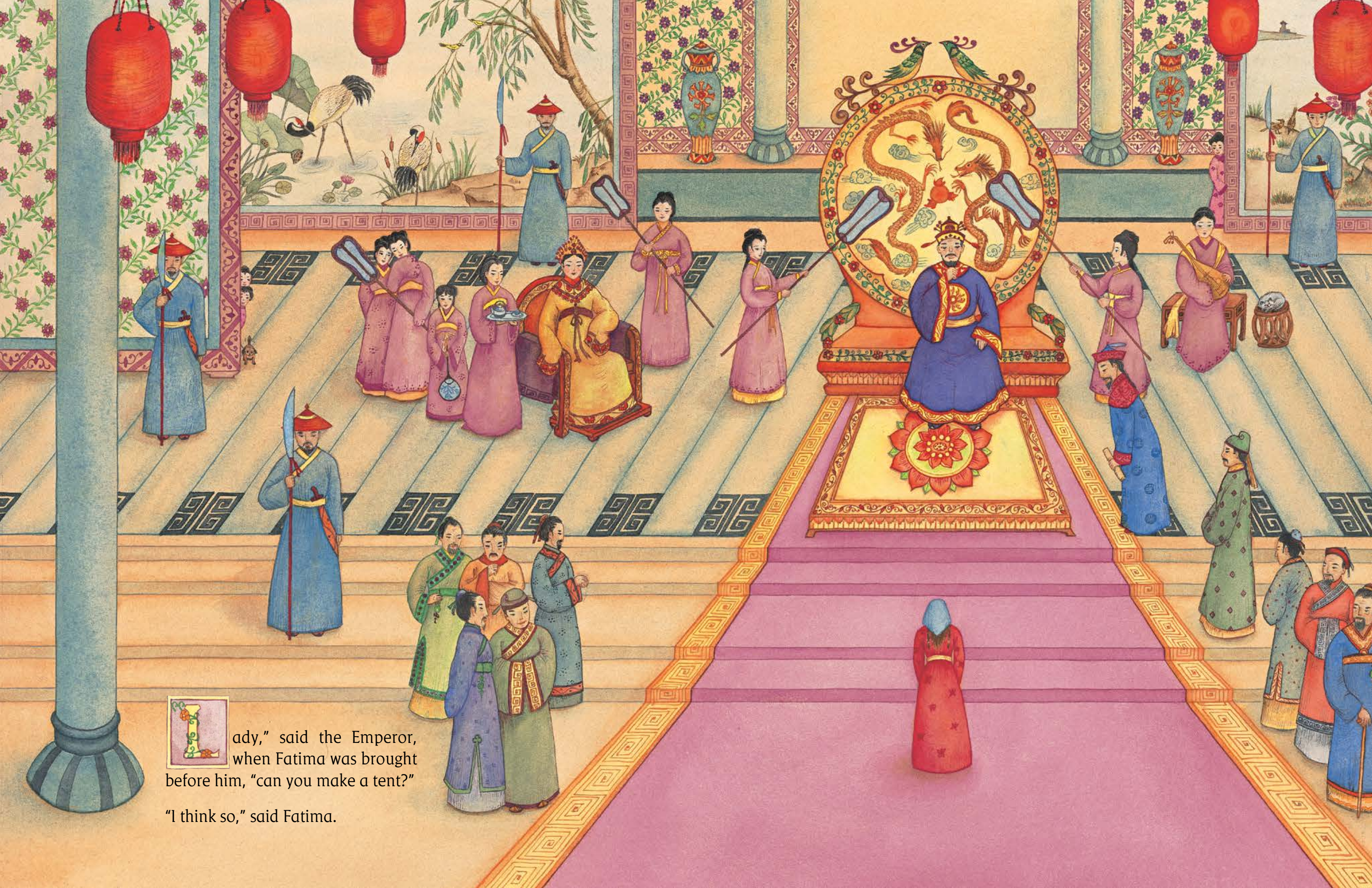




hen Fatima stumbled into a town by the seashore, it was one such occasion.

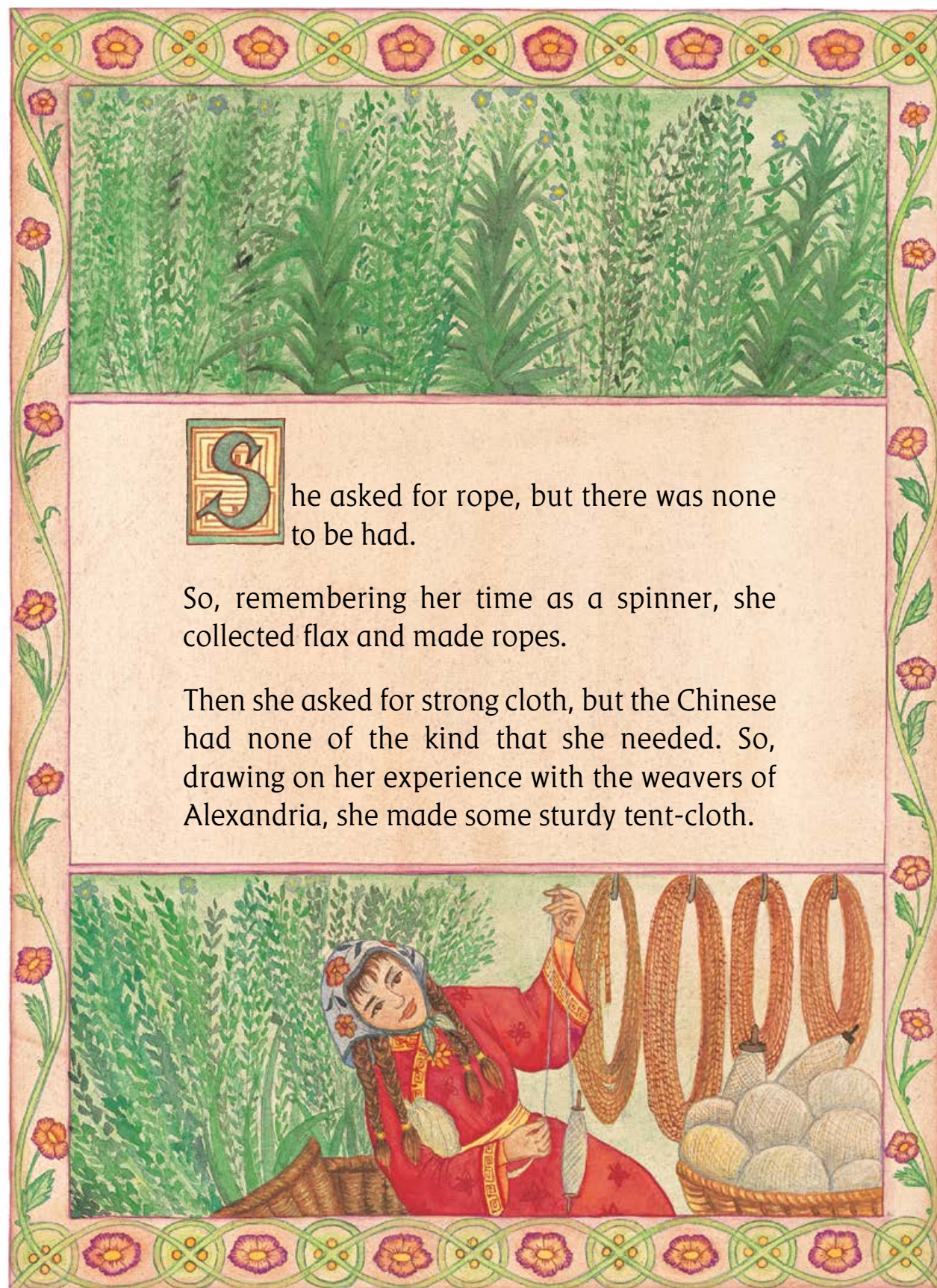
The people spoke to her through an interpreter and explained that she would have to go to see the Emperor.

國王下
臨時找一
達名品
的懂得
外國建造



ady," said the Emperor,
when Fatima was brought
before him, "can you make a tent?"

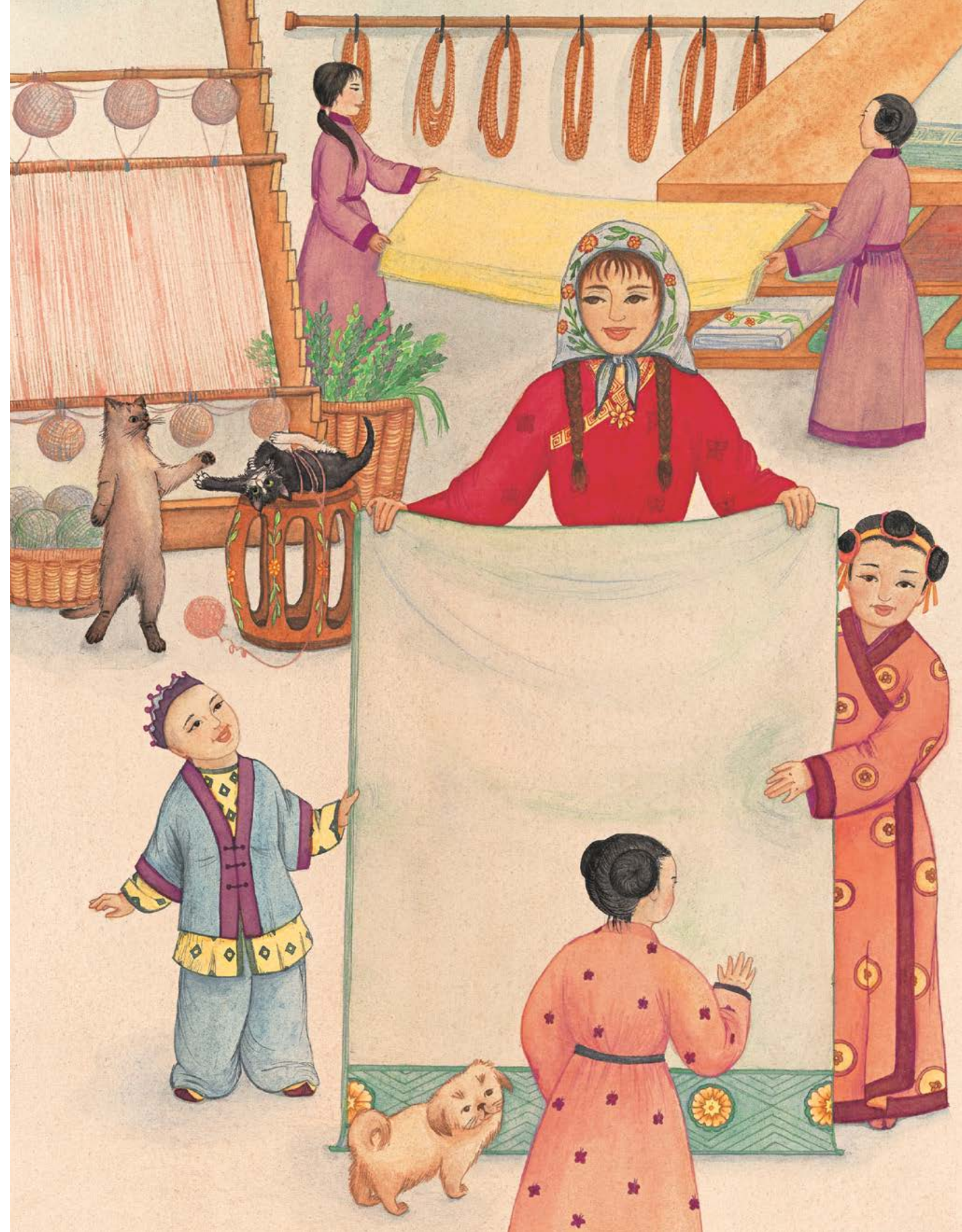
"I think so," said Fatima.



She asked for rope, but there was none to be had.

So, remembering her time as a spinner, she collected flax and made ropes.

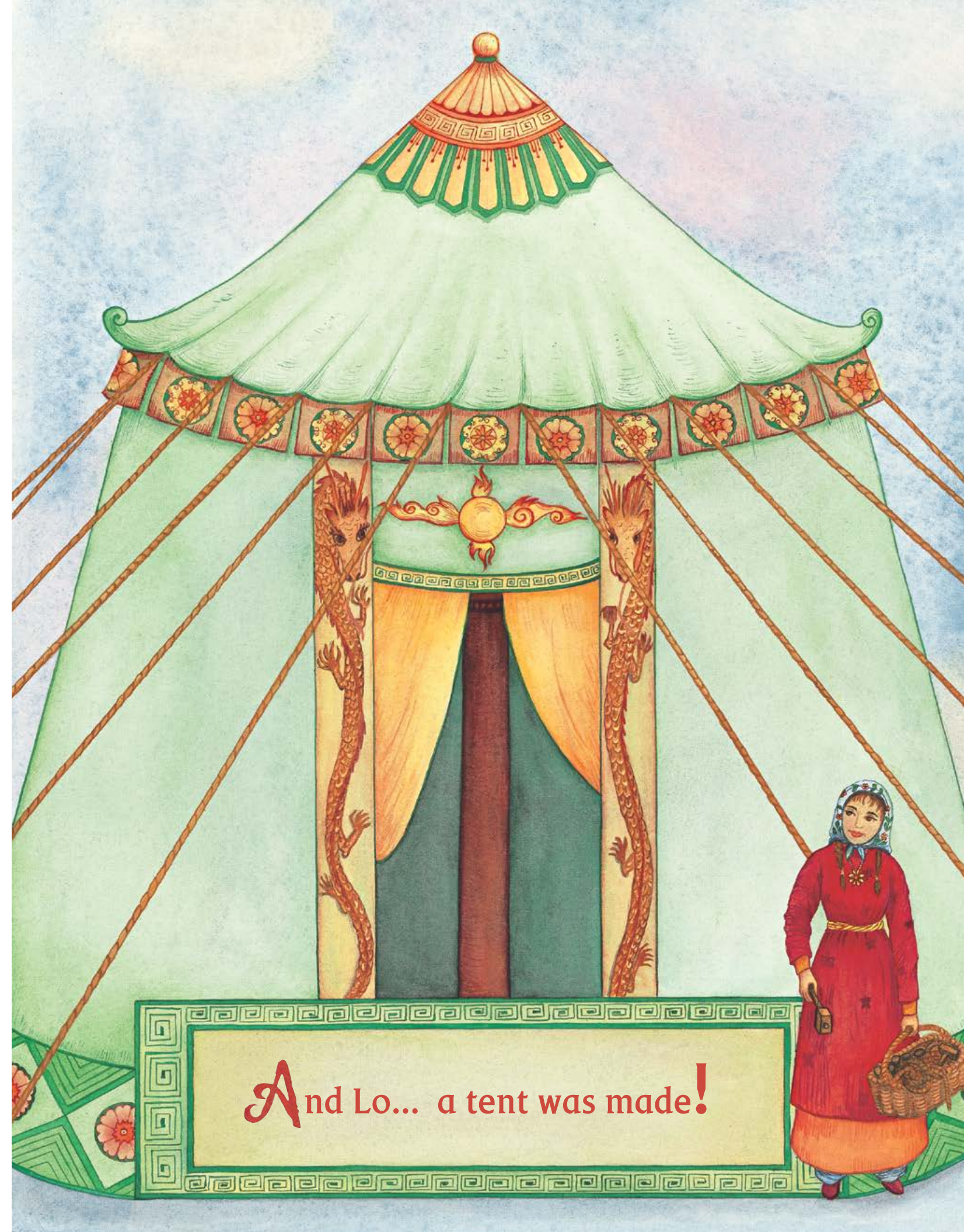
Then she asked for strong cloth, but the Chinese had none of the kind that she needed. So, drawing on her experience with the weavers of Alexandria, she made some sturdy tent-cloth.



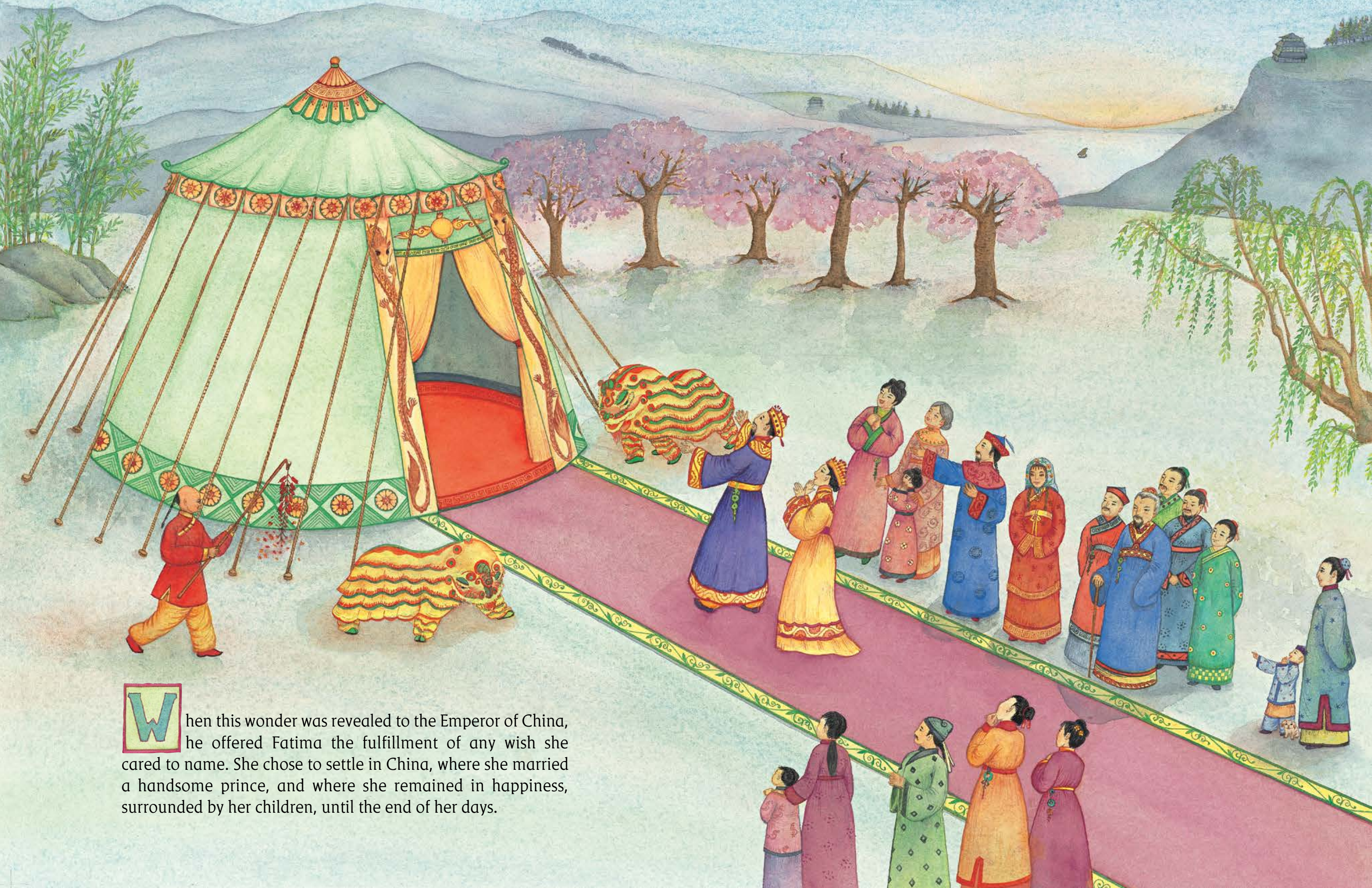


Then she found that she needed tent-poles, but there were none in China. So, Fatima, remembering how she had been trained by the mast-builder of Istanbul, cunningly made strong tent-poles.

When these were ready, she racked her brains for the memory of all the tents she had seen in her travels...



And Lo... a tent was made!



W

hen this wonder was revealed to the Emperor of China, he offered Fatima the fulfillment of any wish she cared to name. She chose to settle in China, where she married a handsome prince, and where she remained in happiness, surrounded by her children, until the end of her days.



It was through these adventures that Fatima realized that what had appeared to be an unpleasant experience at the time, turned out to be an essential part of the making of her ultimate happiness.

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The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water

The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal

The Old Woman and the Eagle

The Man and the Fox

The Man with Bad Manners

The Magic Horse

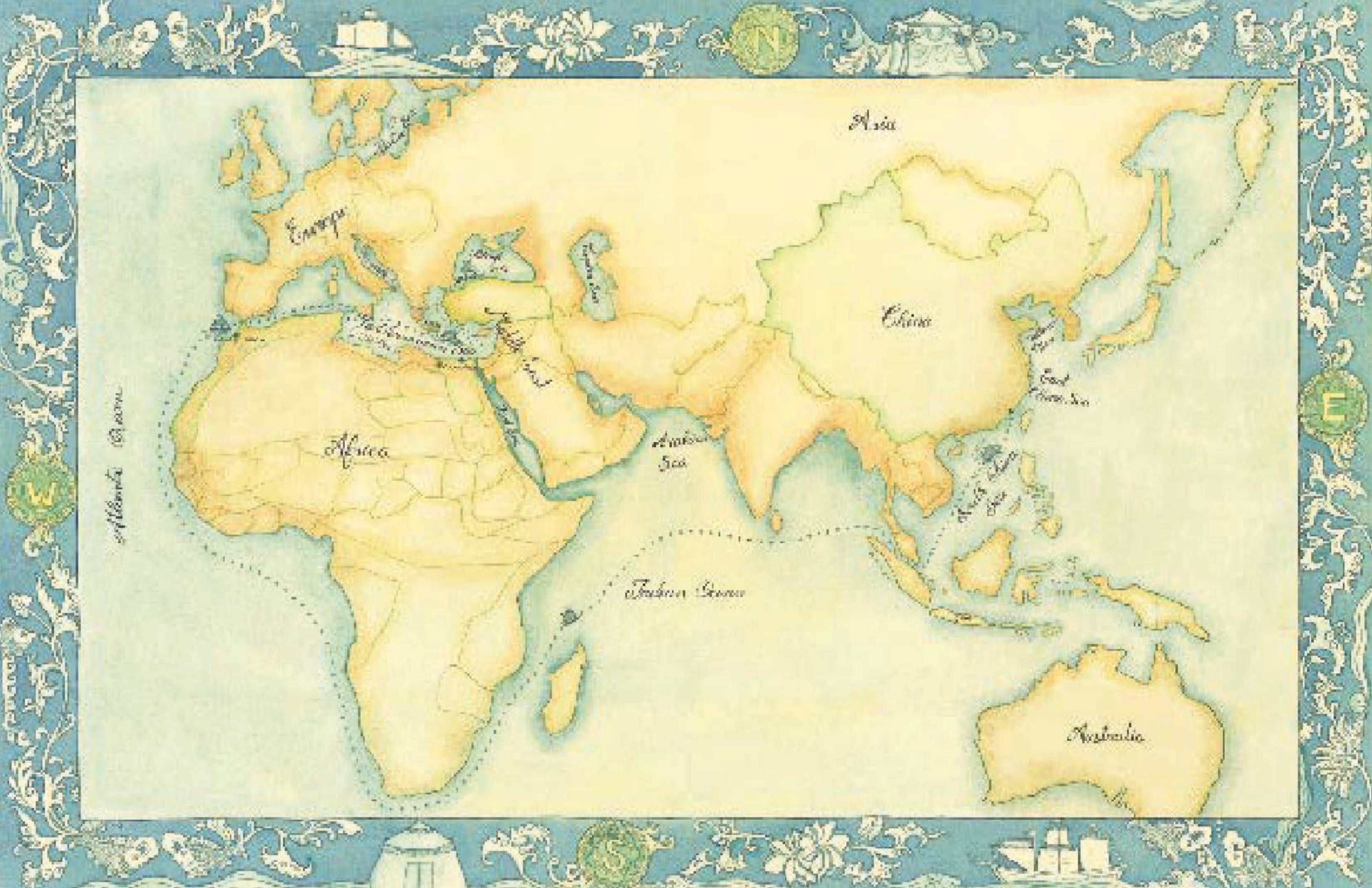
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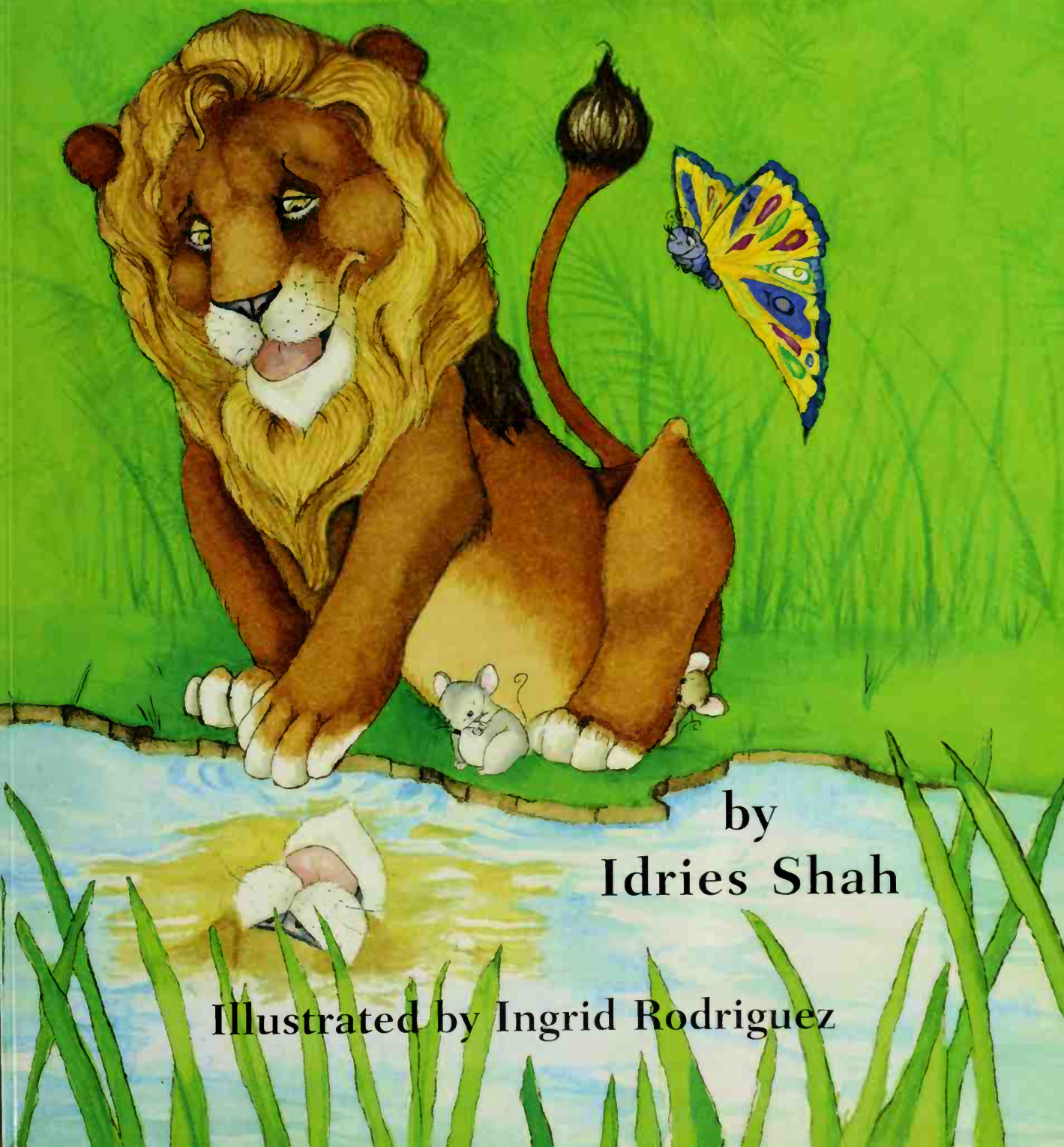
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The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water



by
Idries Shah

Illustrated by Ingrid Rodriguez

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The lion who saw himself in the water / by Idries Shah : illustrated by Ingrid Rodriguez.

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Summary: As he gapes and growls at his ferocious reflection in a pool of water as shiny as a mirror, a terrified lion grows desperately thirsty.

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The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water

by Idries Shah



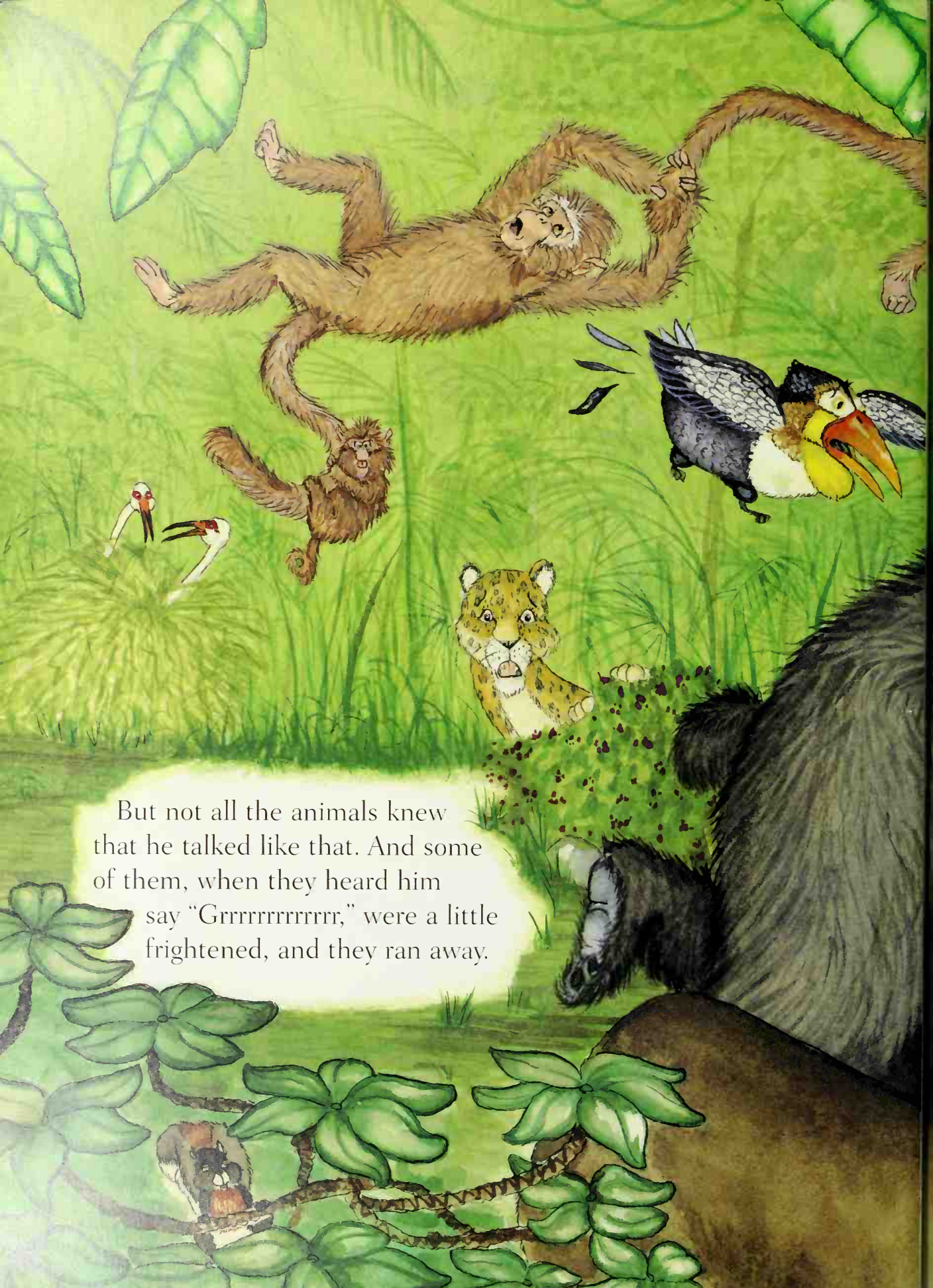
HOOPOE BOOKS
BOSTON

Now, once upon a time there was a lion and his name was Share the Lion. And he was king of all the animals in the jungle.

He had a lovely golden mane on his head, all furry — just like hair, only furry and golden. And he had a lovely golden coat. He used to go about and say “Grrrrrrrrrrrrr” because that’s how lions talk.

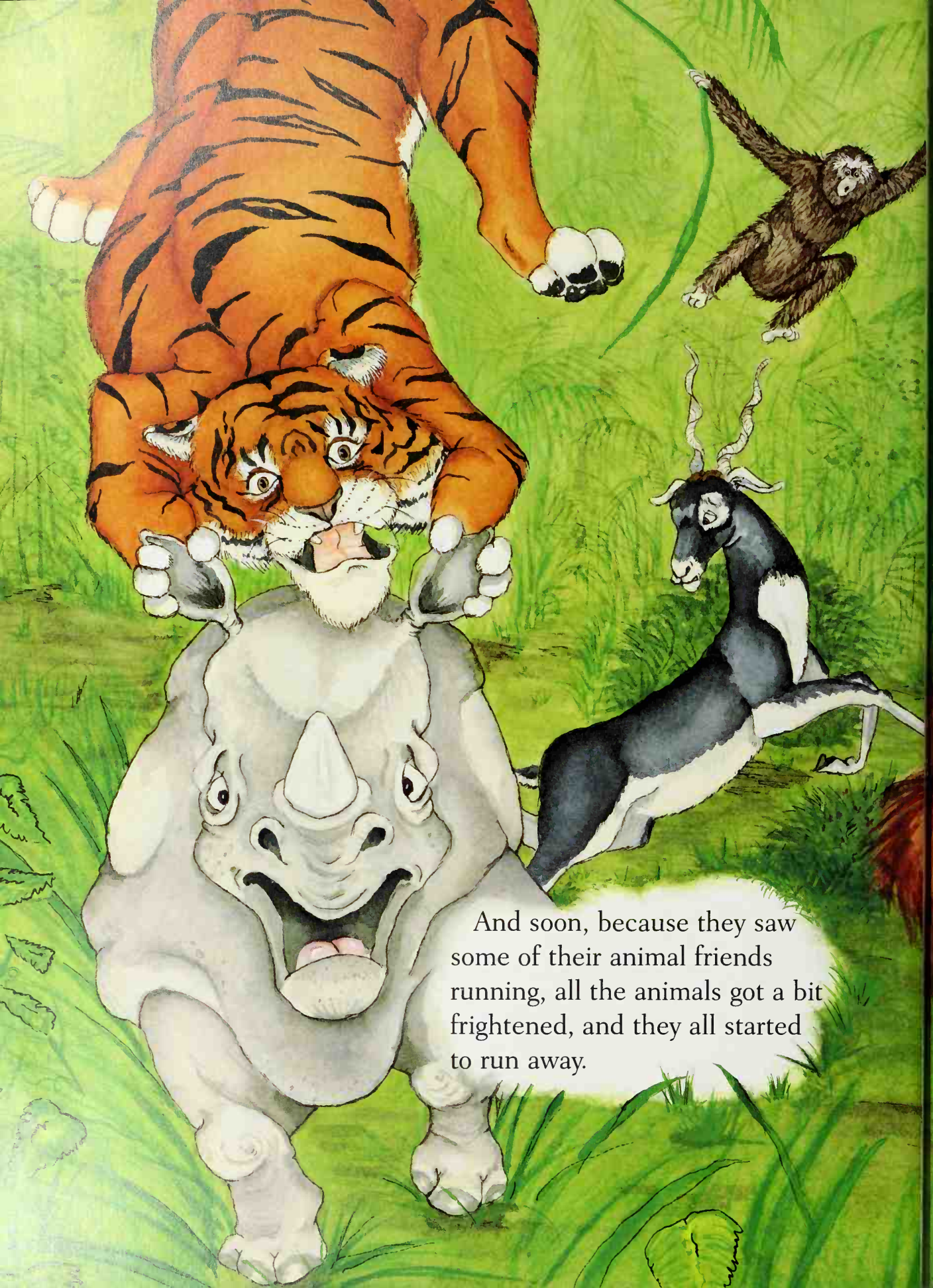






But not all the animals knew that he talked like that. And some of them, when they heard him say "Grrrrrrrrrrrr," were a little frightened, and they ran away.





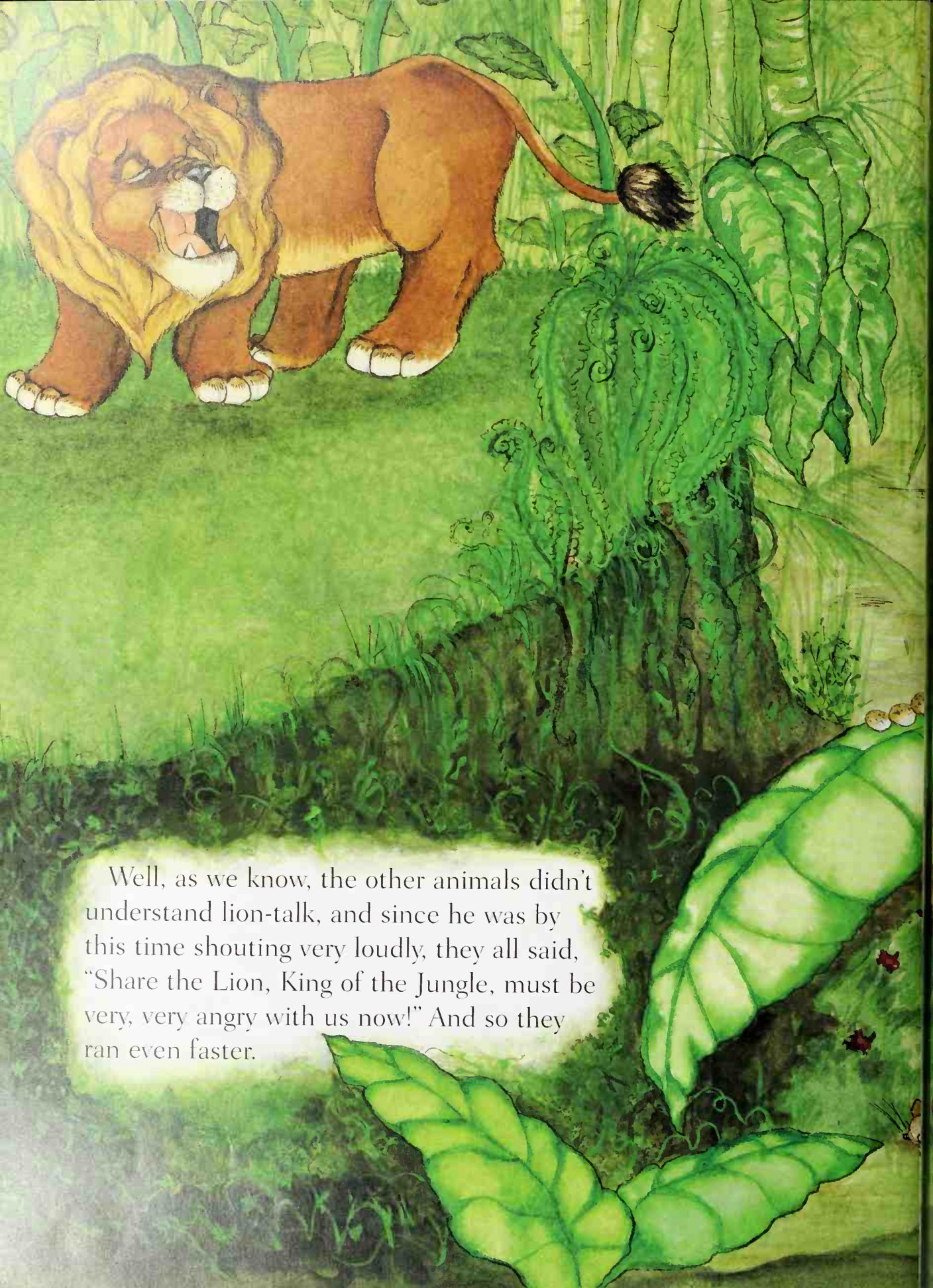
And soon, because they saw some of their animal friends running, all the animals got a bit frightened, and they all started to run away.



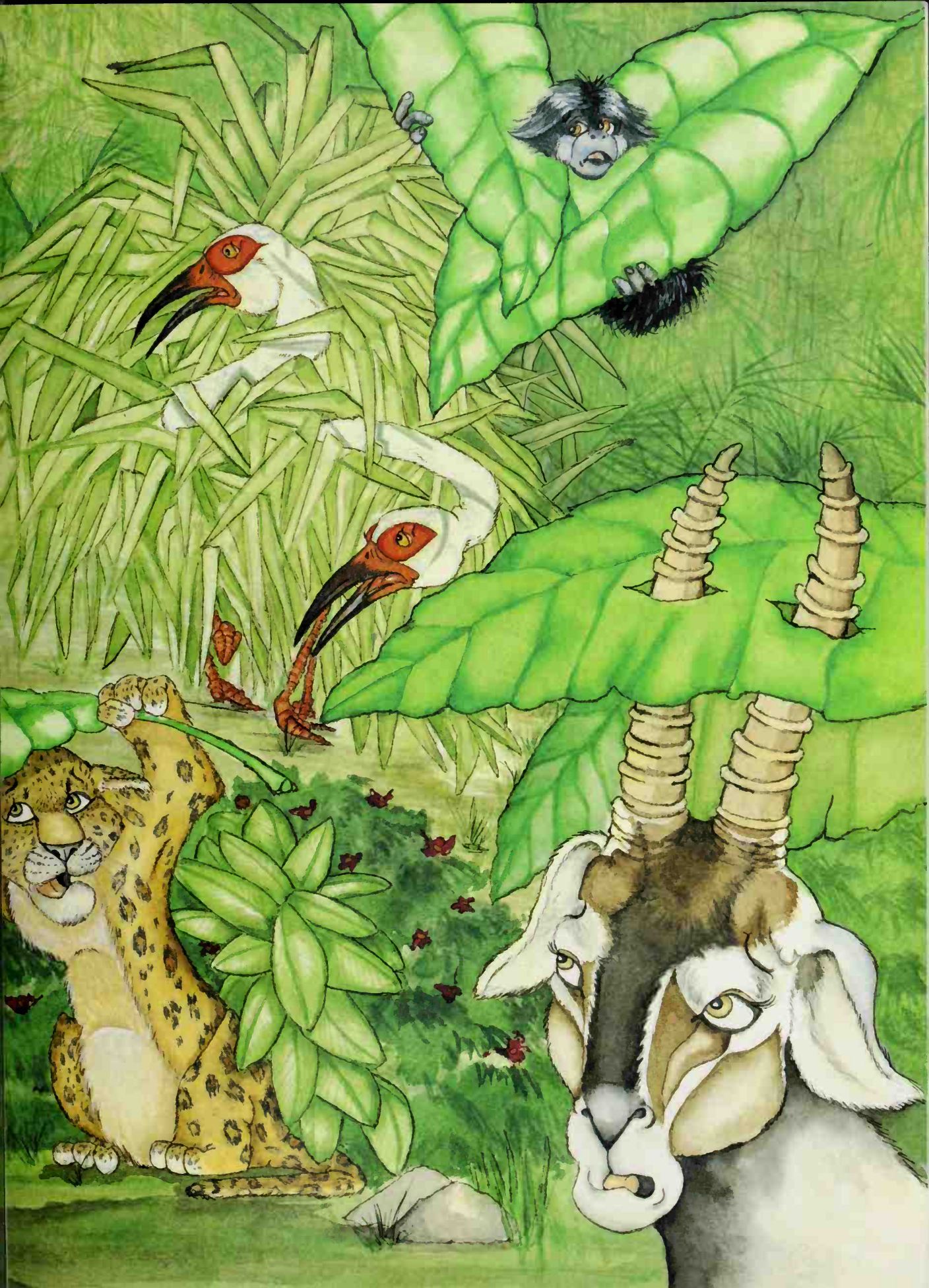
Now, Share the Lion thought, "That's funny! Why is everybody running away from me?" So he shouted, "Grr-grrr?" which, in lion-talk, means "Why are you running away?"







Well, as we know, the other animals didn't understand lion-talk, and since he was by this time shouting very loudly, they all said, "Share the Lion, King of the Jungle, must be very, very angry with us now!" And so they ran even faster.



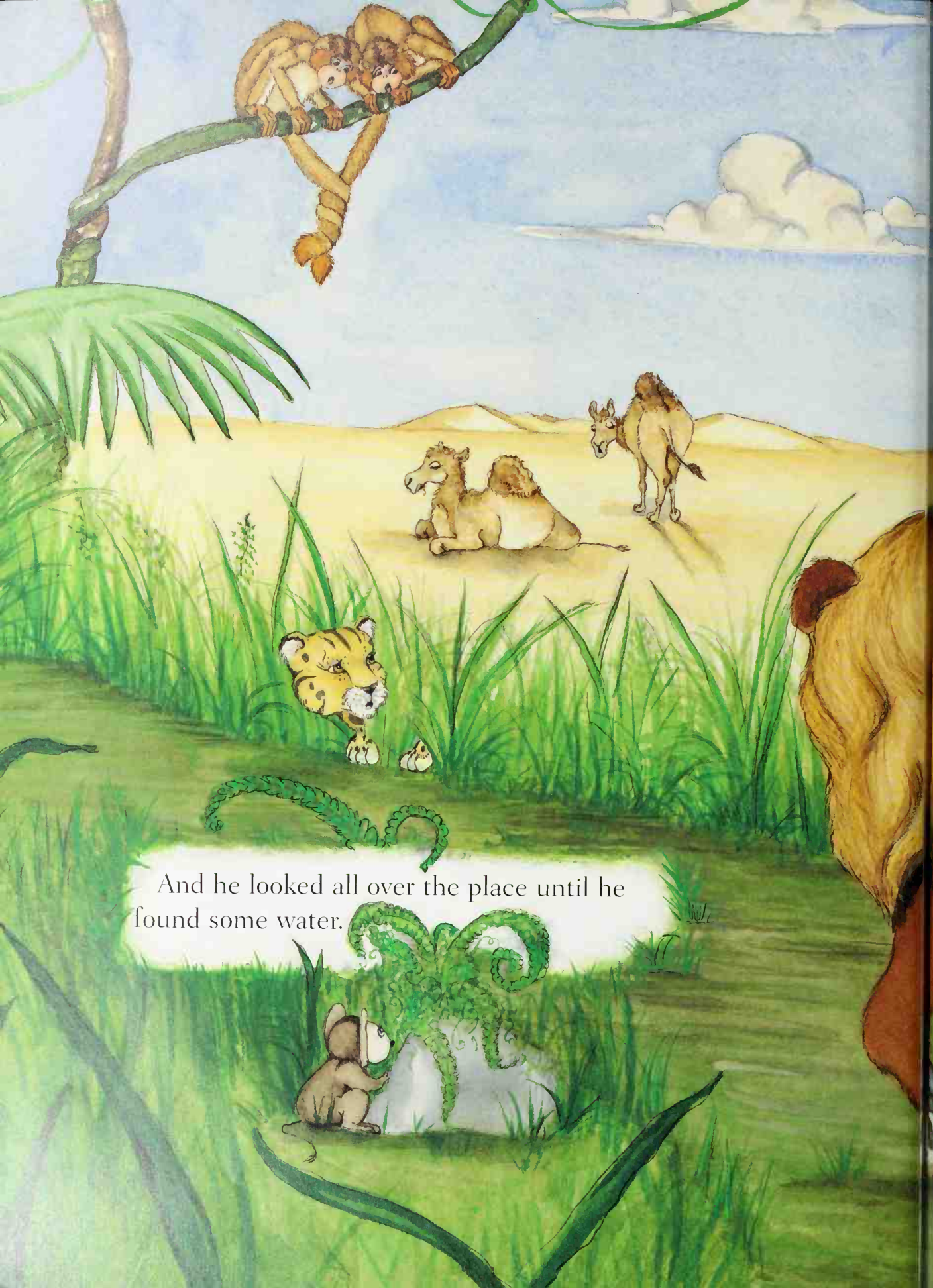


Of course, Share wasn't angry at all.
He just wanted to know why they were
all running away.

Then he thought, "Well, they are a silly
lot of animals! I won't take any notice of
them. I'm thirsty. I think I'll go and have
a drink of water from a pool."



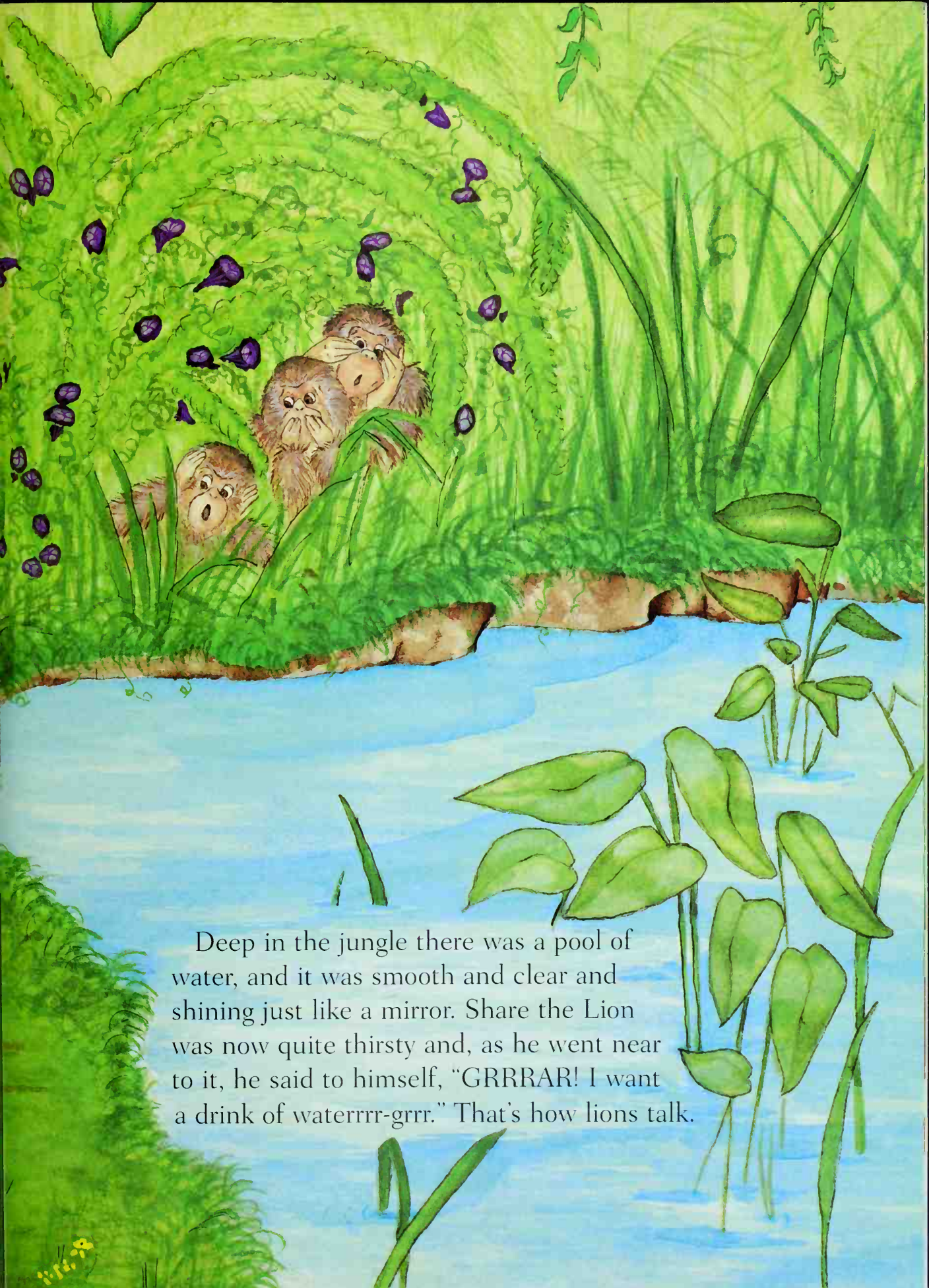




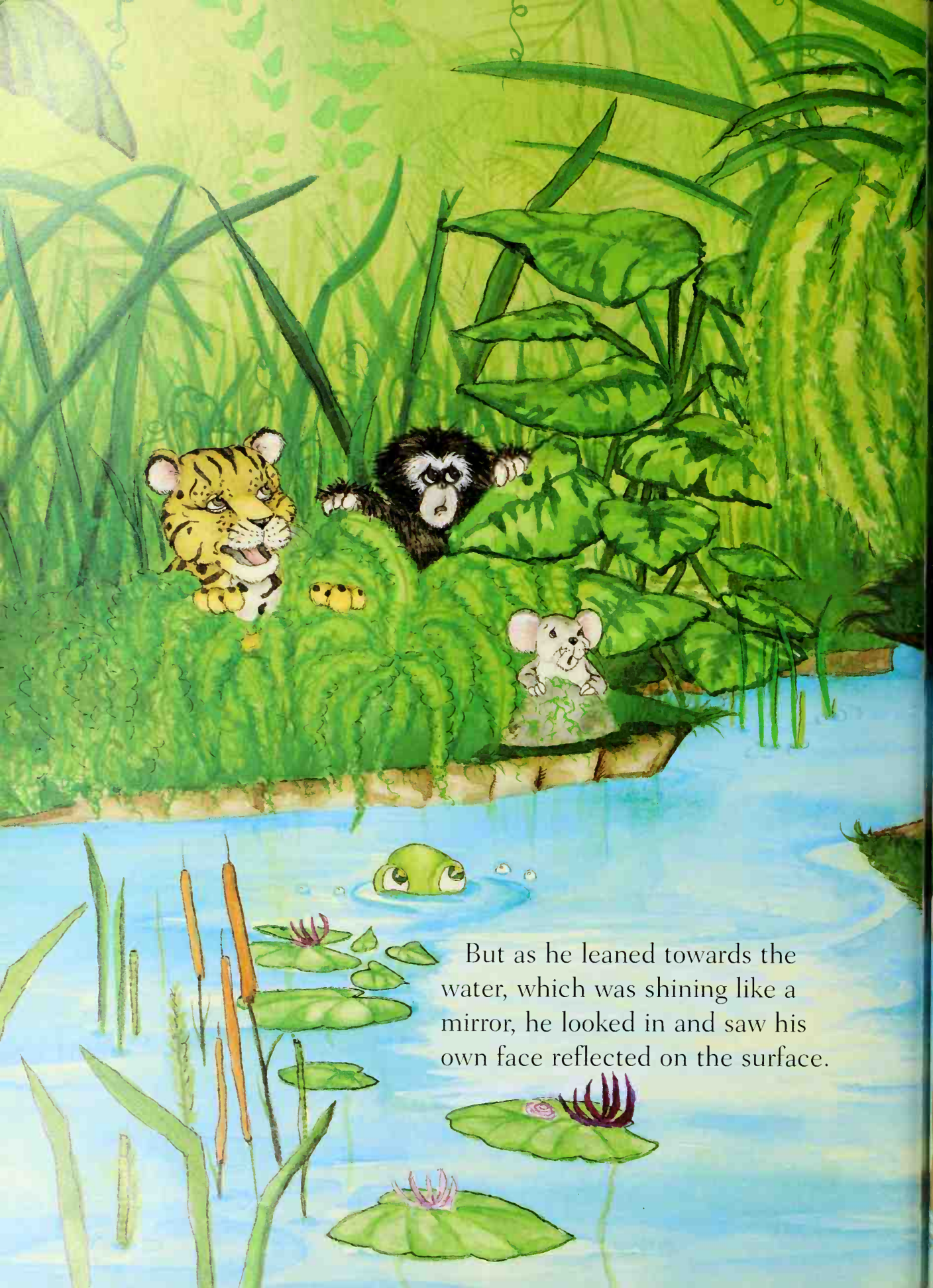
And he looked all over the place until he
found some water.







Deep in the jungle there was a pool of water, and it was smooth and clear and shining just like a mirror. Share the Lion was now quite thirsty and, as he went near to it, he said to himself, "GRRRAR! I want a drink of waterrrr-grrr." That's how lions talk.



But as he leaned towards the water, which was shining like a mirror, he looked in and saw his own face reflected on the surface.



Well, he had never seen that before, and so he thought there was another lion in the pool of water, who was looking back at him.

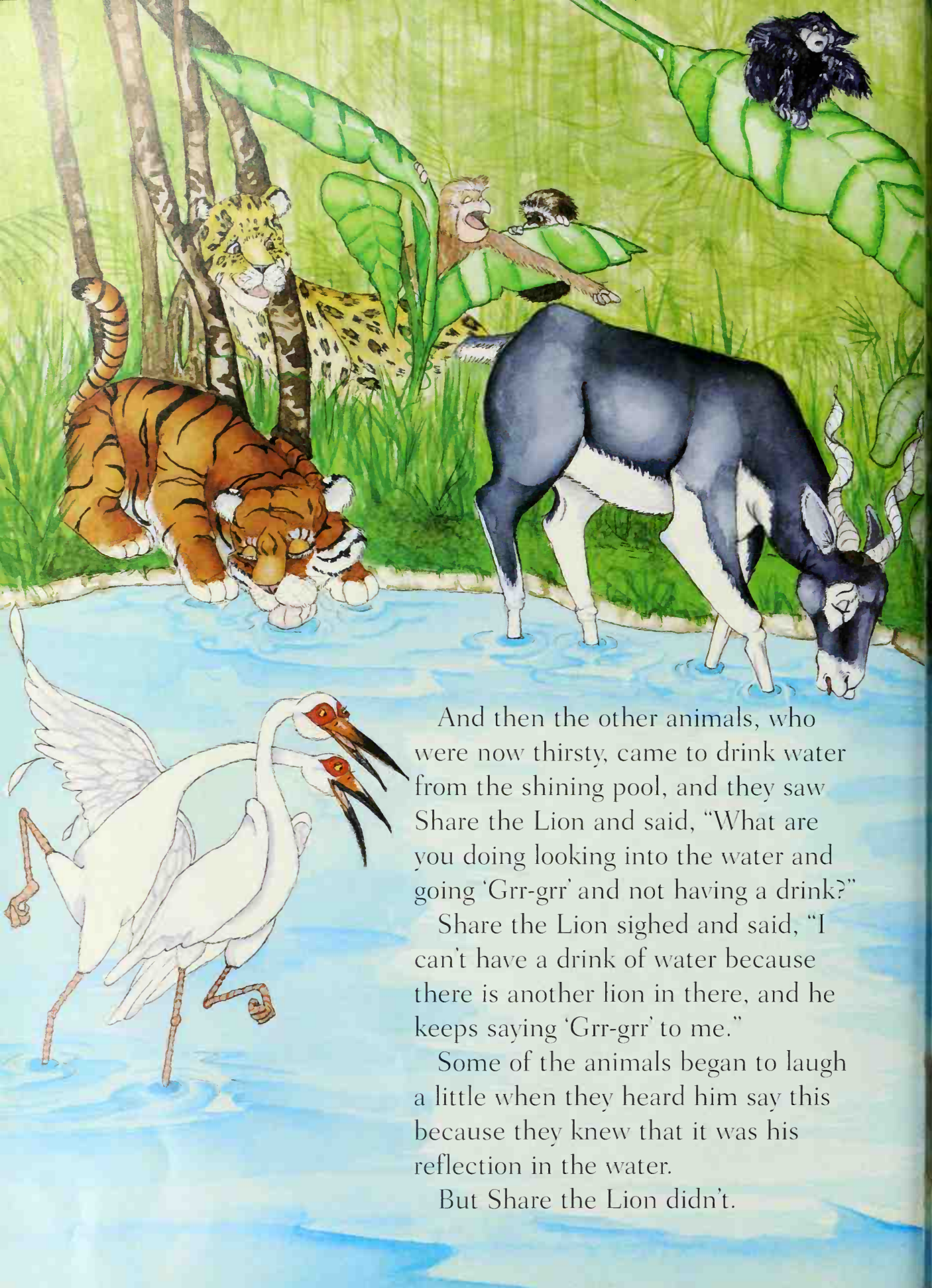
And he was too afraid of this other lion to drink anything at all!

Wasn't he a funny lion?

"Oh, dear me!" he said to himself. "That's another lion, and he wants to stop me drinking his water." And then he said, "Grrrr!" to the other lion, which, in lion-talk, means "I want some water too!"





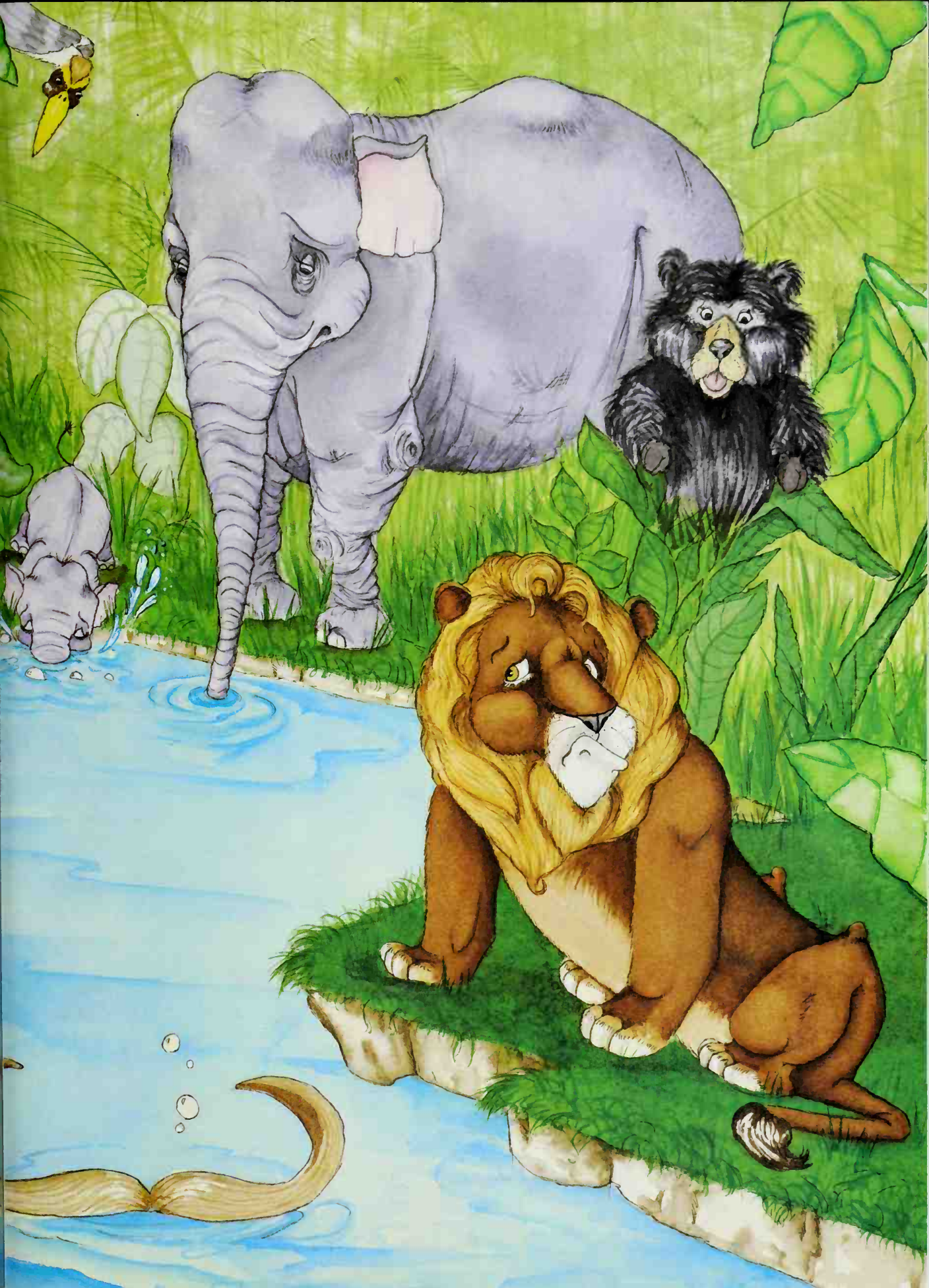


And then the other animals, who were now thirsty, came to drink water from the shining pool, and they saw Share the Lion and said, "What are you doing looking into the water and going 'Grr-grr' and not having a drink?"

Share the Lion sighed and said, "I can't have a drink of water because there is another lion in there, and he keeps saying 'Grr-grr' to me."

Some of the animals began to laugh a little when they heard him say this because they knew that it was his reflection in the water.

But Share the Lion didn't.



And then a beautiful butterfly flew very close to the Lion's ear and said in her tiny little voice, "Don't be silly, Share the Lion. There's nobody in the water!"

But Share the Lion said, "Of course there's somebody in the water. I can see him!"

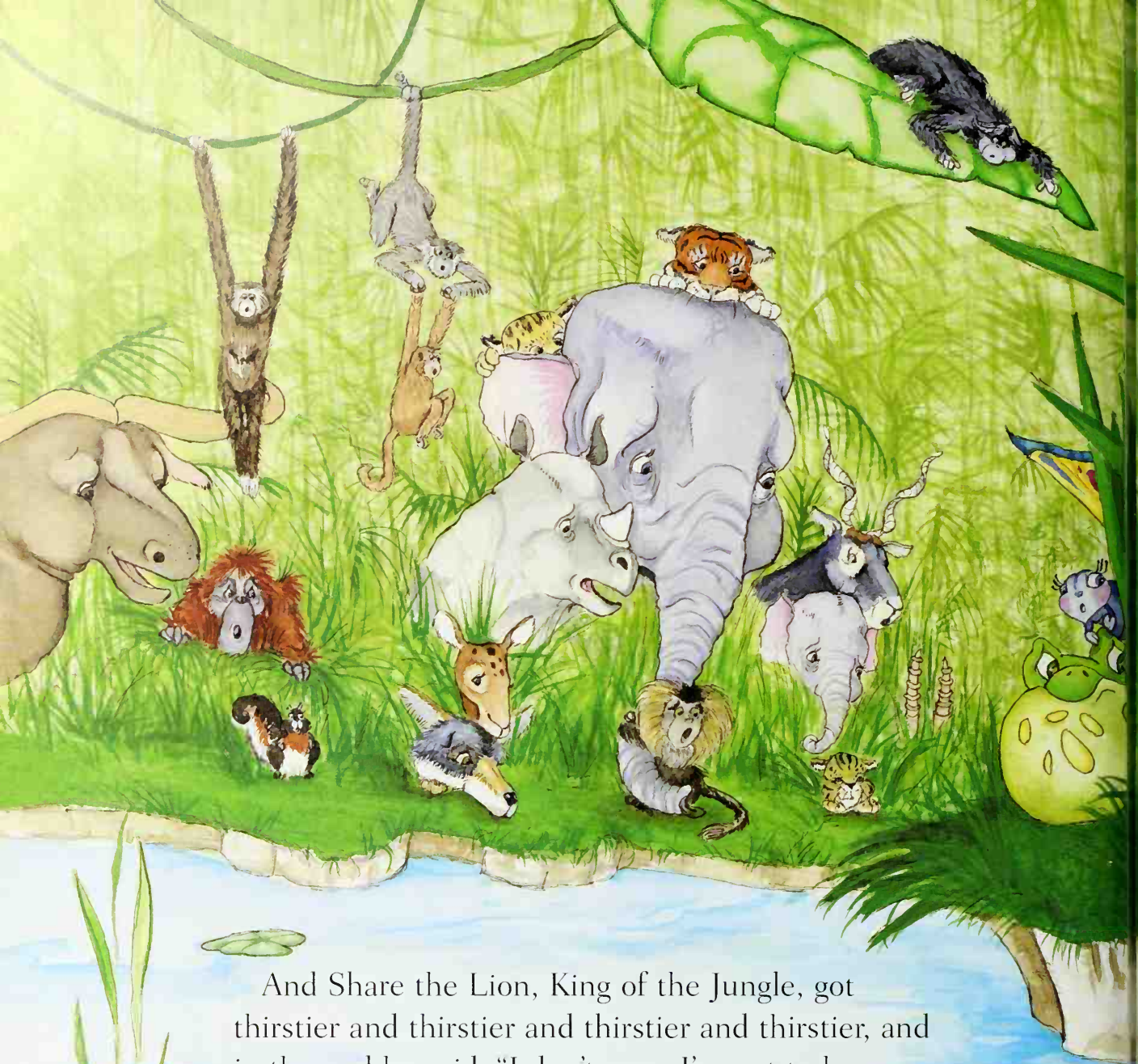






And everybody just stopped and waited to see what would happen.





And Share the Lion, King of the Jungle, got thirstier and thirstier and thirstier and thirstier, and in the end he said, "I don't care. I've got to have water. I am terribly thirsty. I don't care about that lion in there, or how fierce he is!"

And he put his head into the water, and when he did, he felt the lovely cool water in his mouth and began to drink. As he drank, he saw that the other lion had disappeared. Of course, it had disappeared because it was never really there at all. It was just his own reflection in the water.







And when he took his head out of the water and saw all the animals standing there, he said, "Well, at last I've learned that a reflection is not the same as the real thing!"





And so, everybody lived happily ever after.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

Fatima the Spinner and the Tent
The Man with Bad Manners
The Man and the Fox
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Silly Chicken
The Farmer's Wife
Neem the Half-Boy
The Boy Without A Name
The Magic Horse
World Tales

Literature

The Hundred Tales of Wisdom
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Caravan of Dreams
Wisdom of the Idiots
The Magic Monastery
The Dermis Probe

Novel

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Informal Beliefs

Oriental Magic
The Secret Lore of Magic

Humor

The Exploits of the Incomparable Mulla Nasrudin
The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin
The Subtleties of the Inimitable Mulla Nasrudin
The World of Nasrudin
Special Illumination

Travel

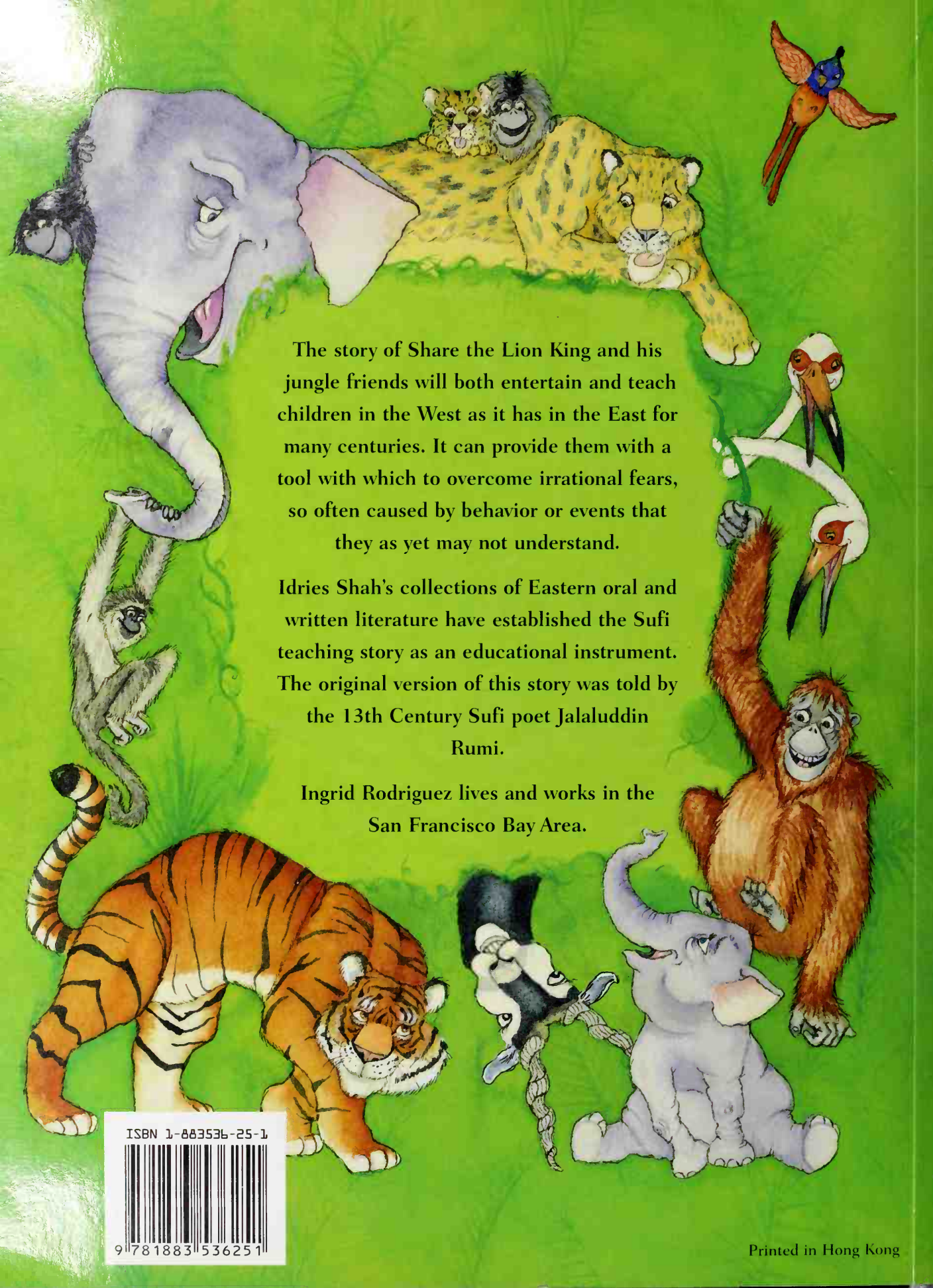
Destination Mecca

Human Thought

Learning How to Learn
The Elephant in the Dark
Thinkers of the East
Reflections
A Veiled Gazelle
Seeker After Truth

Sufi Studies

The Sufis
The Way of the Sufi
Tales of the Dervishes
The Book of the Book
Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
The Commanding Self
Knowing How to Know



The story of Share the Lion King and his
jungle friends will both entertain and teach
children in the West as it has in the East for
many centuries. It can provide them with a
tool with which to overcome irrational fears,
so often caused by behavior or events that
they as yet may not understand.

Idries Shah's collections of Eastern oral and
written literature have established the Sufi
teaching story as an educational instrument.
The original version of this story was told by
the 13th Century Sufi poet Jalaluddin
Rumi.

Ingrid Rodriguez lives and works in the
San Francisco Bay Area.

ISBN 1-883536-25-1



9 781883 536251

Printed in Hong Kong

This story is about a badly behaved man and how a young boy initiates a plan to change his behavior and, with the help of all the villagers, succeeds. It will bring laughter to young children and, at the same time, teach them valuable lessons about conflict resolution, initiative and co-operation.

Part of a rich body of literature from Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Middle East, this story is one of many collected and retold for children by the Afghan author Idries Shah. It is the first in this series to be set in the West.

Rose Mary Santiago has illustrated two earlier books in this series: the award-winning *The Farmer's Wife* and *The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal*, a featured selection at the Library of Congress' end-of-year program.

"A series of children's books that have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life... Through repeated readings, these stories provoke fresh insight and more flexible thought in children."

NEA Today, The Magazine
of the National Education Association

"These stories give a child or adult the ability to see new possibilities and alternative ways of doing things."

"Teaching Stories & the Brain,"
a lecture given at The Library of Congress

ISBN 1-883536-30-8



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Printed in Hong Kong

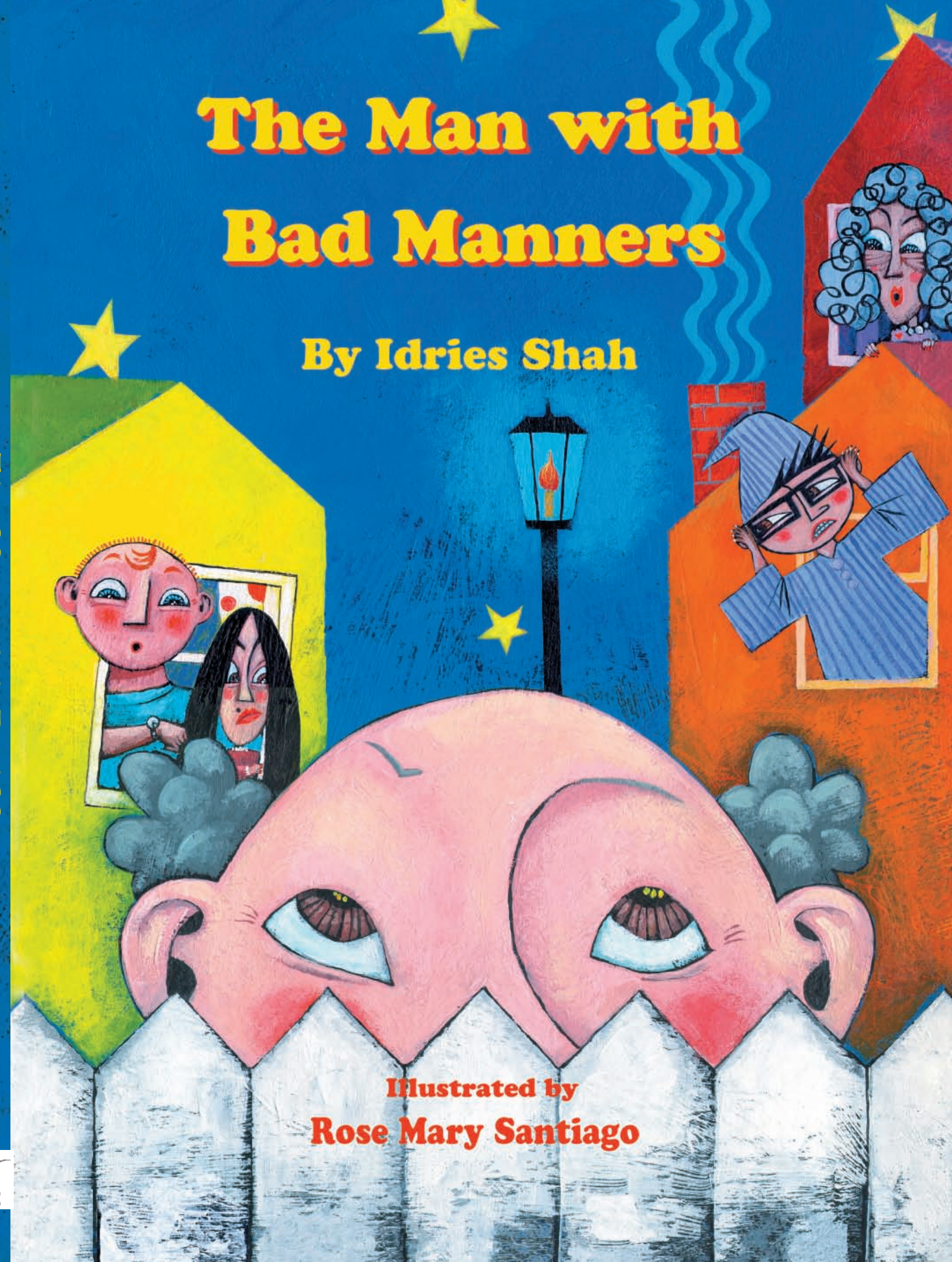
Idries Shah / Santiago

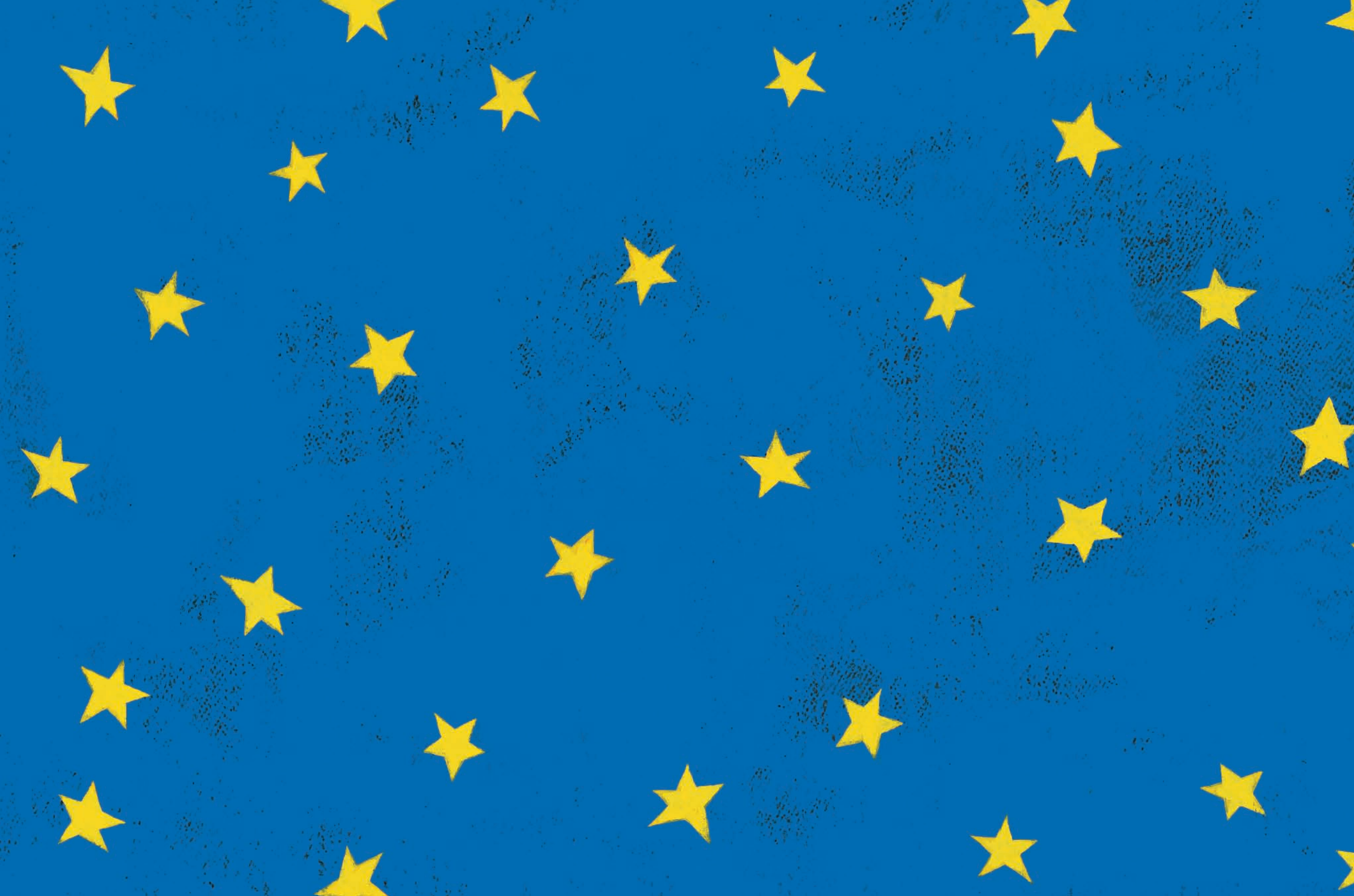
The Man with Bad Manners

The Man with Bad Manners

By Idries Shah

Illustrated by
Rose Mary Santiago





For Eric, who is just a bit more polite - RMS

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The Man with Bad Manners

Written by

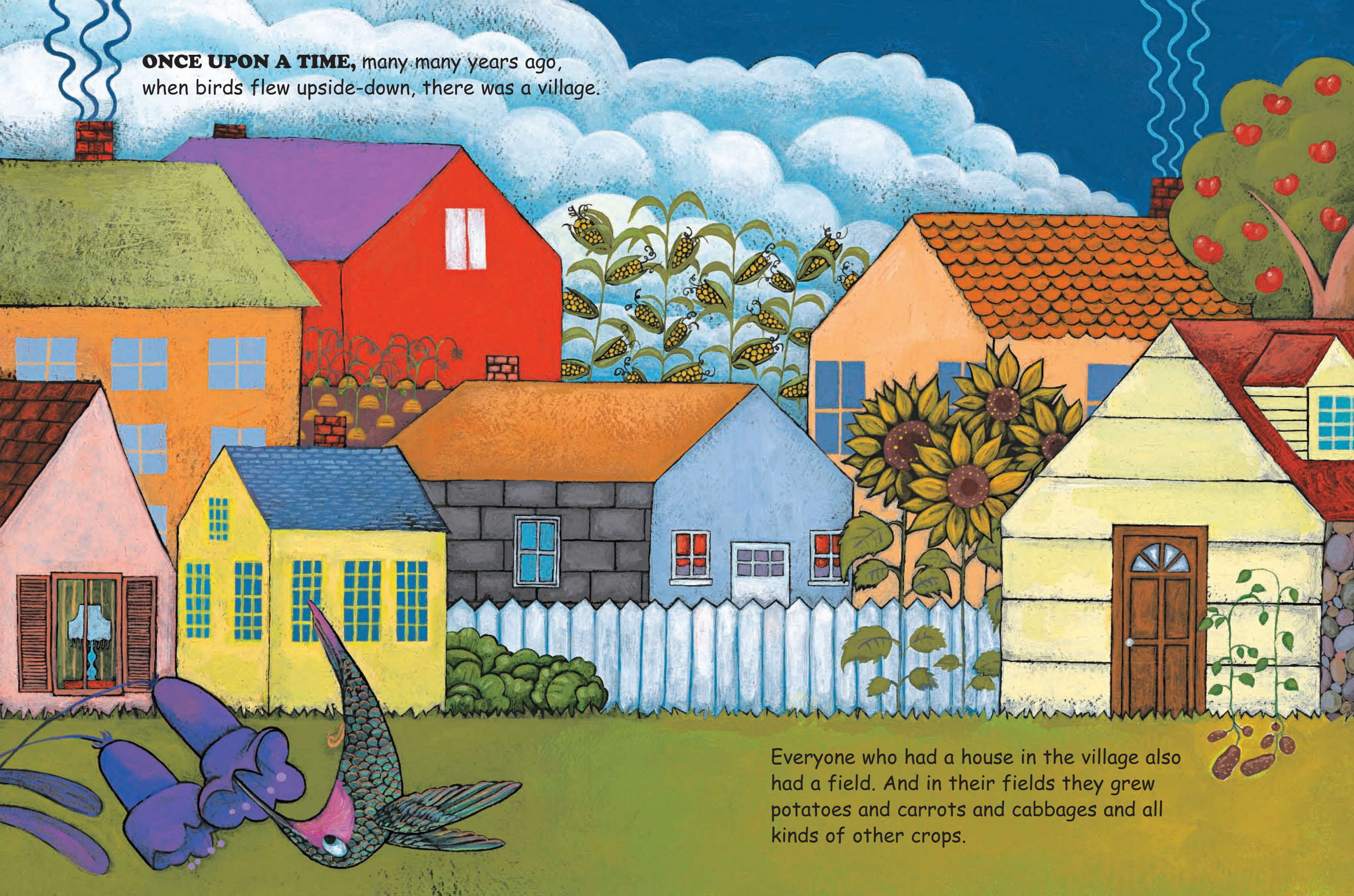
Idries Shah



HOPOE BOOKS

BOSTON

ONCE UPON A TIME, many many years ago,
when birds flew upside-down, there was a village.



Everyone who had a house in the village also
had a field. And in their fields they grew
potatoes and carrots and cabbages and all
kinds of other crops.

Now, all the people who lived in the village were very courteous and well-behaved, except for one man who had very bad manners.





Whenever anybody said "good morning" to the man with bad manners, he would say "blah, blah, blah." And when anybody said "good evening" to him, he would say "blee, blee, blee."

The people would become annoyed when he did this, and they would say, "Why do you have such bad manners?"

But he would just say, "blah, blah, blah." Except, of course, when he said, "blee, blee, blee."



For a long time, the people weren't too bothered by the man's behavior. They knew good manners from bad manners, and most of the time they didn't take much notice of the man with bad manners.

But one day he got worse. He began to go out at night and stand outside different houses, and he would beat tin cans and make terrible noises.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

This would wake the people up, and they would lean out of their windows and say, "Why are you making such a racket?"

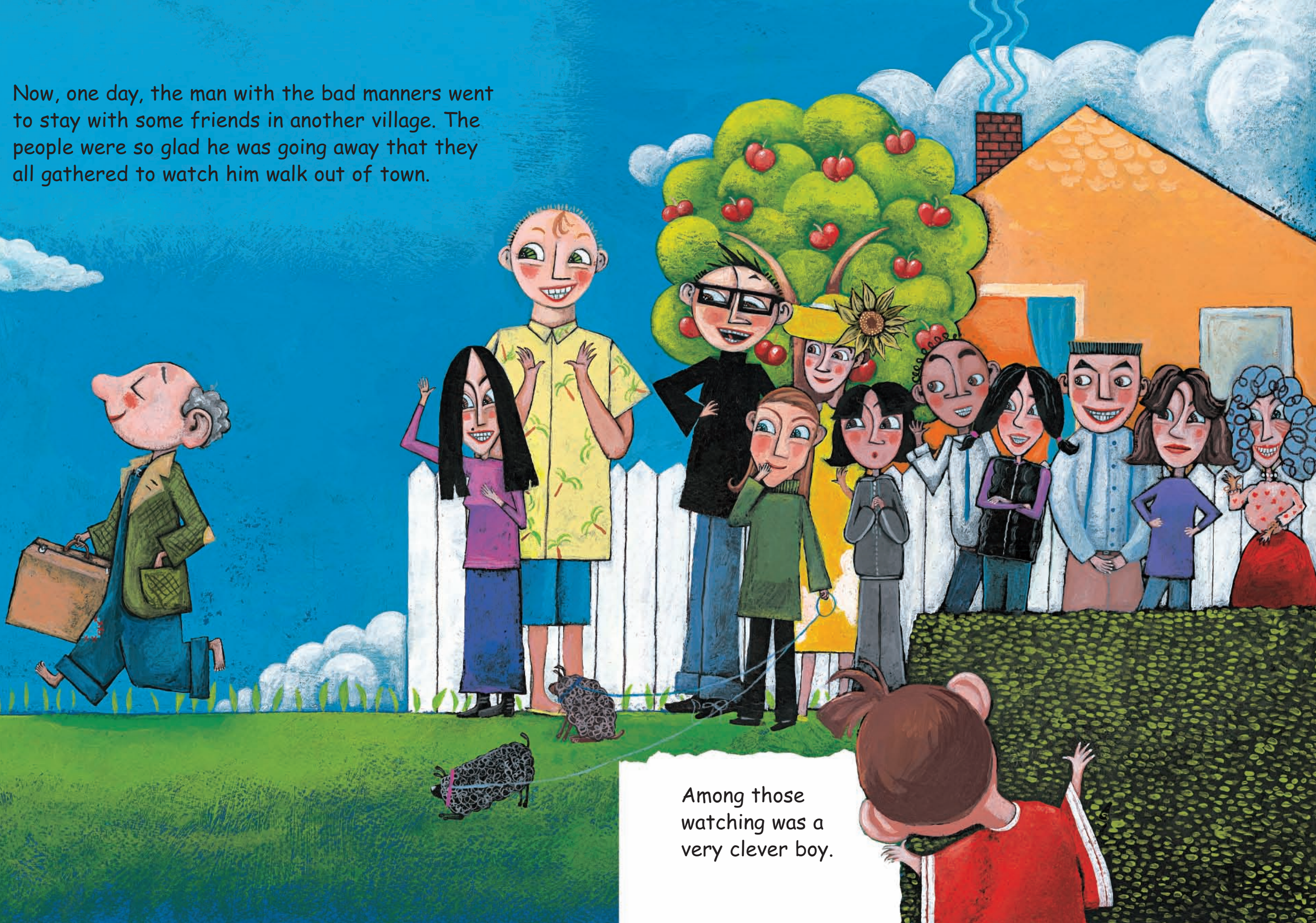
But he would just
beat the cans harder.

BANG! BANG!
BANG! BANG!
BONG! BANG!
BING!
BANG!

The people simply
didn't know
what to do
with him.



Now, one day, the man with the bad manners went to stay with some friends in another village. The people were so glad he was going away that they all gathered to watch him walk out of town.



Among those watching was a very clever boy.

As soon as the man was out of sight, the clever boy stood on a box and called all the people to come together.

And when the people had gathered, the clever boy said, "I want to talk to you about the man with bad manners."



Everyone spoke at once.

"Thank Goodness!"

"Yes, he's gone!"

"He's gone!"



"What a relief!"

"Why should we talk about him?"

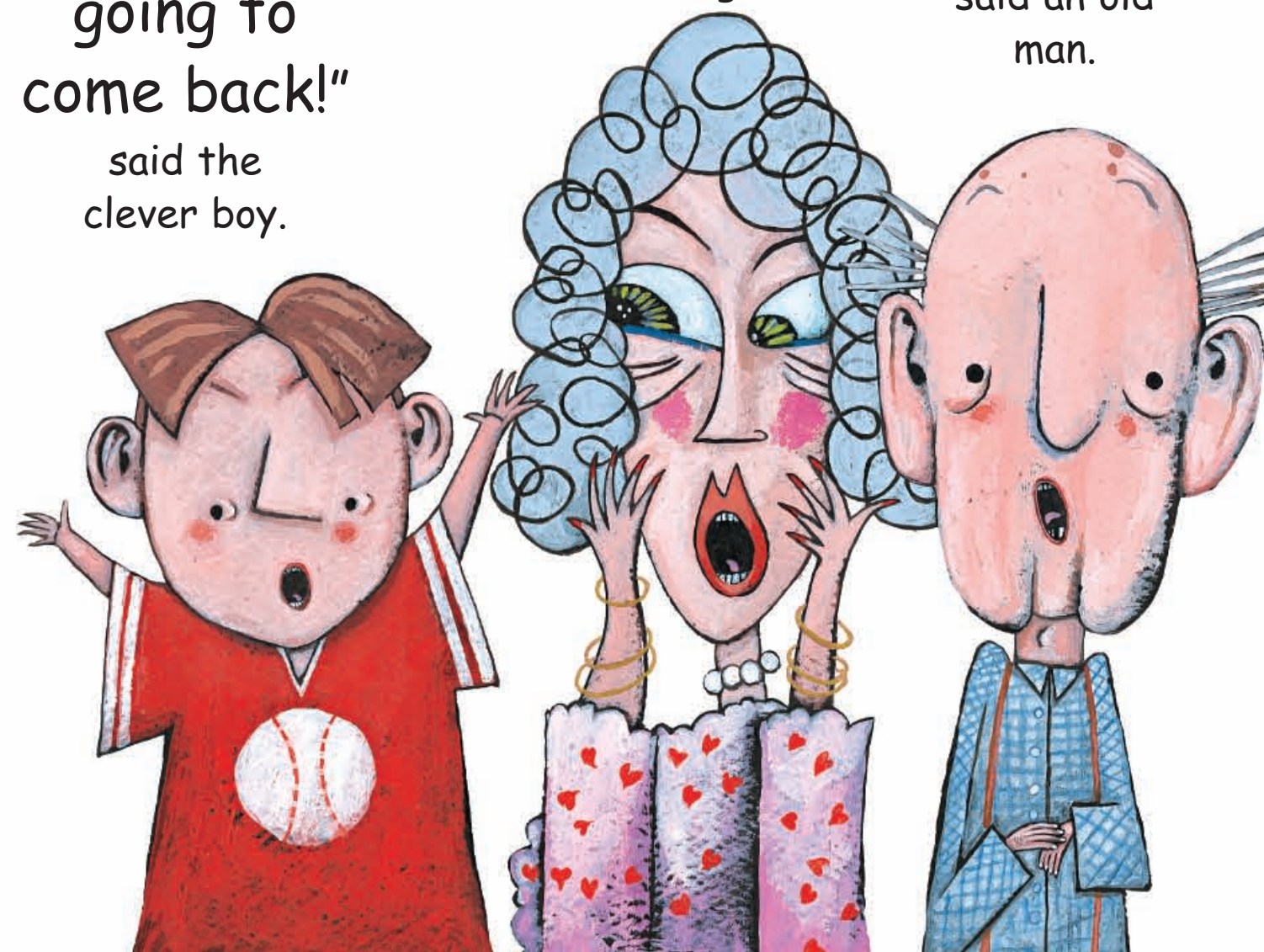


"But he's
going to
come back!"

said the
clever boy.

"You're right," said the
old woman. "He's going
to come back, and
then he will just annoy
us all over again!"

"Yes, indeed,"
said an old
man.





"What can we do?" cried the people.

"I have an idea," said the clever boy. "I've thought of a way to make him change his ways."

"Tell us, quickly!" shouted the people.

"Well," said the clever boy, "the man has a field, and in his field he is growing potatoes. While he's away, we'll take the potatoes out and put carrots in their place."



Then, when he comes back, we can pretend that it isn't his field and that this isn't even his village."

"What about his house?" asked the old woman.

"He'll go to his house, and he'll know that this is his village because he'll see his house right there."

"His house is red", said the clever boy. "We'll paint it green so he'll think it's some other house."

"What if he goes inside?"
asked the old woman.



"I've thought of that, too," said the clever boy.



"We'll paint the walls a different color, and we'll paint the furniture a different color, and then we'll rearrange it. He's sure to think then that it's somebody else's house.

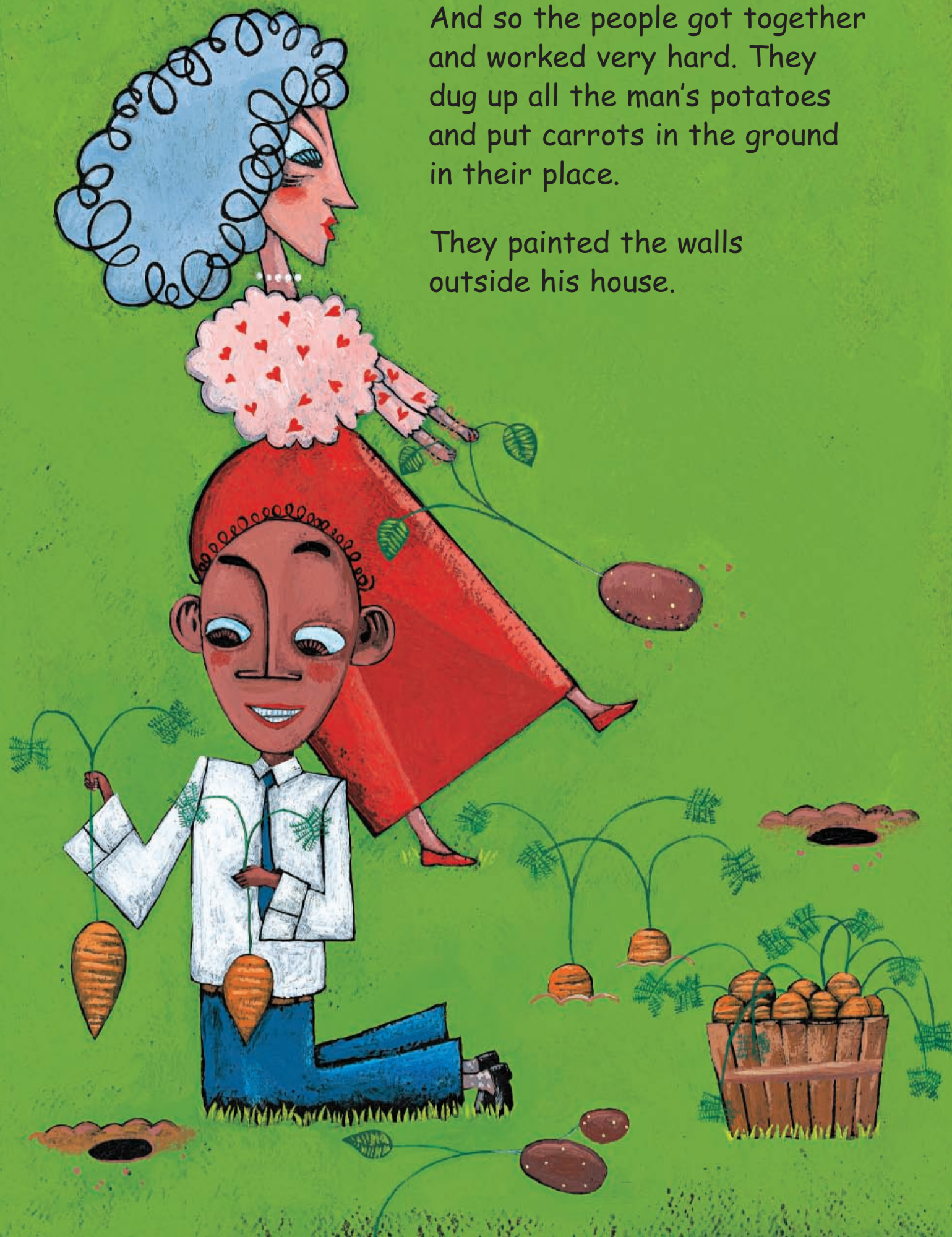
"What good will that do?" several people said.

"Well," said the clever boy, "he'll either go away or he'll change his ways."

"You know," said the old woman, "it just may work!"

And so the people got together
and worked very hard. They
dug up all the man's potatoes
and put carrots in the ground
in their place.

They painted the walls
outside his house.



They painted the walls inside his house. They painted all the furniture. And they rearranged everything so that it all looked quite different.



Not long afterwards, the man with the bad manners came back. As he walked into the village, he said "blah, blah, blah" and "blee, blee, blee" to everyone he saw, and he hit tin cans just as loudly as ever. **Bang! Bang! Bang!**

The people gathered around him, and the clever boy said, "Hello there! Who are you?"

"You know who I am," said the man with bad manners, banging on a can.



"Oh, no, we don't!" said the people.

"Yes, you do! This is my potato field," said the man, pointing to his field.

"But there are carrots in this field," said the clever boy, pulling a carrot out of the ground. "This can't be your field."

"But my house is right over there!" said the man.

"What color is your house?" asked the clever boy.

"You know perfectly well that my house is red,"
said the man.



"But this house is green," said the clever boy.

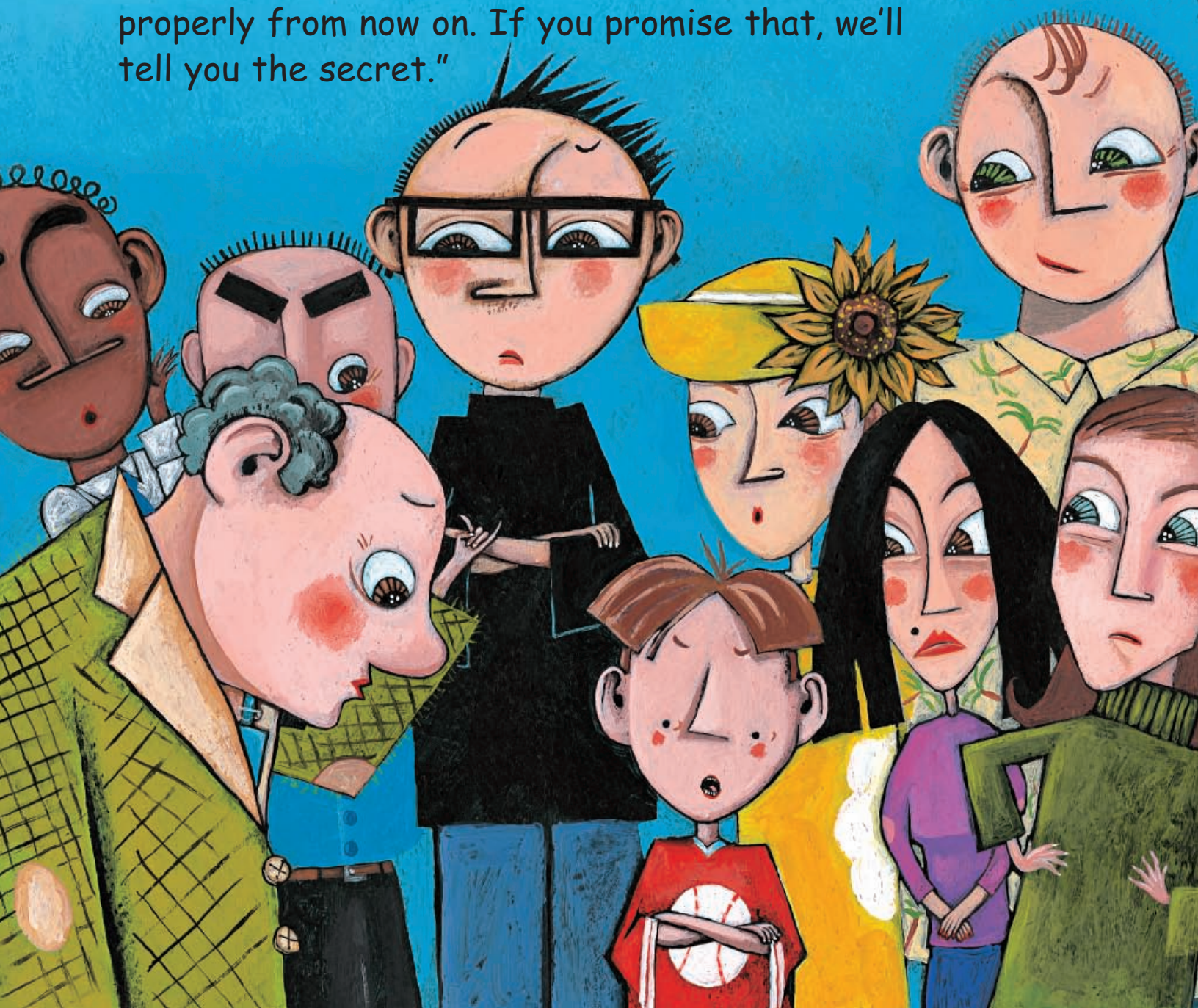
The man looked carefully at his house and said,
"Good heavens! That house is green."

And then he ran over to the window and looked
inside and saw that everything was quite unfamiliar.

"Dear me!" said the man, scratching his head. "Maybe I don't come from this village after all."

He looked around at all the villagers, and then looked down at the ground, and all of a sudden, he became very sad. "But, if I don't come from this village, where do I come from?"

"It's a secret," said the clever boy, "but we can tell you the secret only on one condition. You must promise to use good manners and speak courteously and behave properly from now on. If you promise that, we'll tell you the secret."

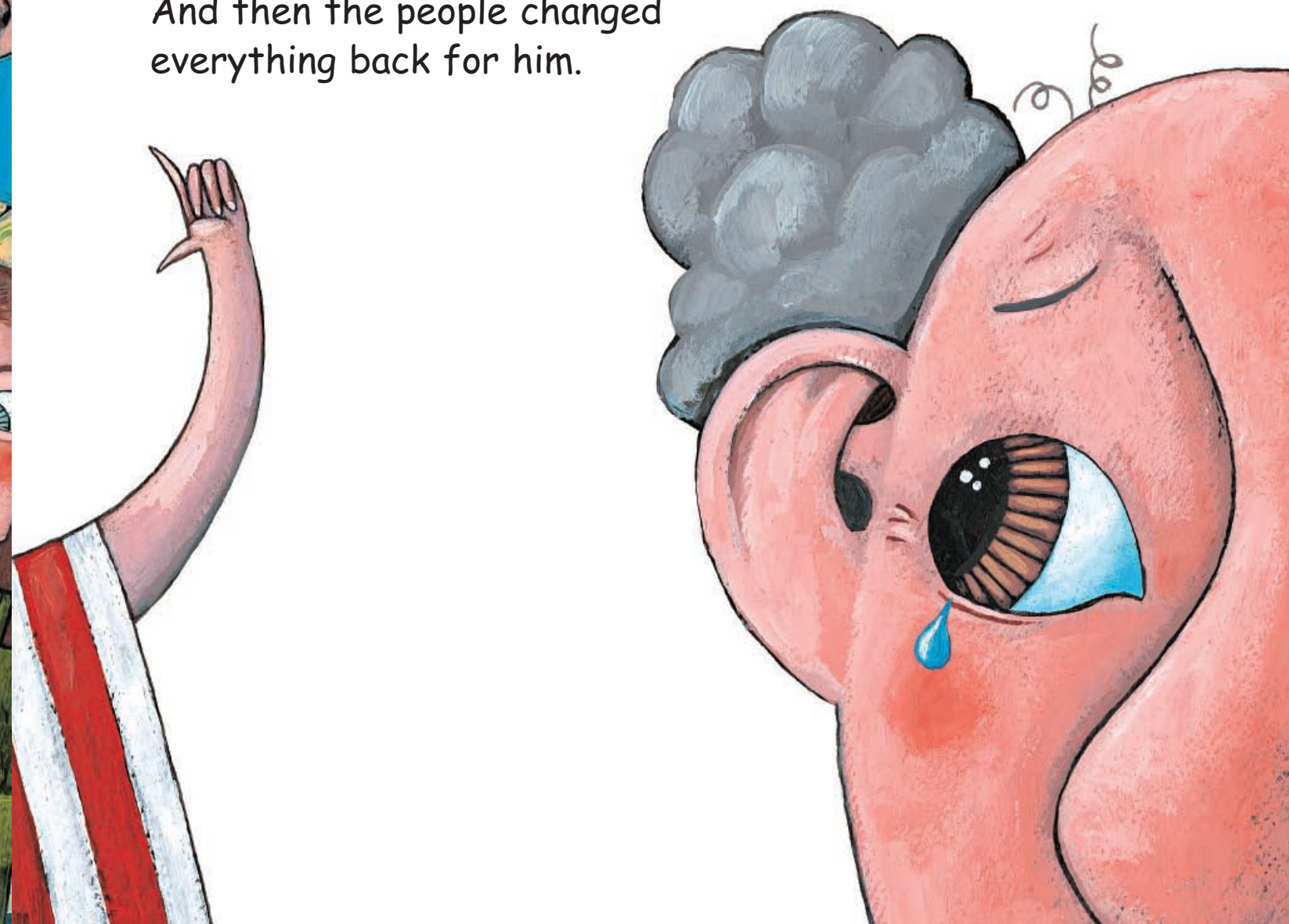


"I promise! I promise!" said the man. "Please tell me!"

And then the people all spoke at once. "We painted your house on the outside." "We put carrots in your field." "We painted it on the inside." "We painted all your furniture." "And, then, we rearranged it."

"We did it all to teach you a lesson," said the clever boy. "But now that you have promised to behave yourself, we'll change everything back, and we can all live happily ever after."

So, the man with bad manners promised again to change his ways. He promised, and he promised, and he promised. And then the people changed everything back for him.



From then on, when anyone said, "Good morning," to the man, he replied cheerily, "Good morning to you!"

And when anyone said, "Good evening," to the man, he replied courteously, "Good evening to you!"

And he never banged another can ... ever. And so, indeed, everyone did live happily ever after.



Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
El León que se Vio en el Agua/The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
La Esposa del Granjero/The Farmer's Wife
The Silly Chicken
The Boy Without a Name
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Man with Bad Manners
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Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
The Commanding Self
Knowing How to Know

Studies of the English

Darkest England
The Natives are Restless

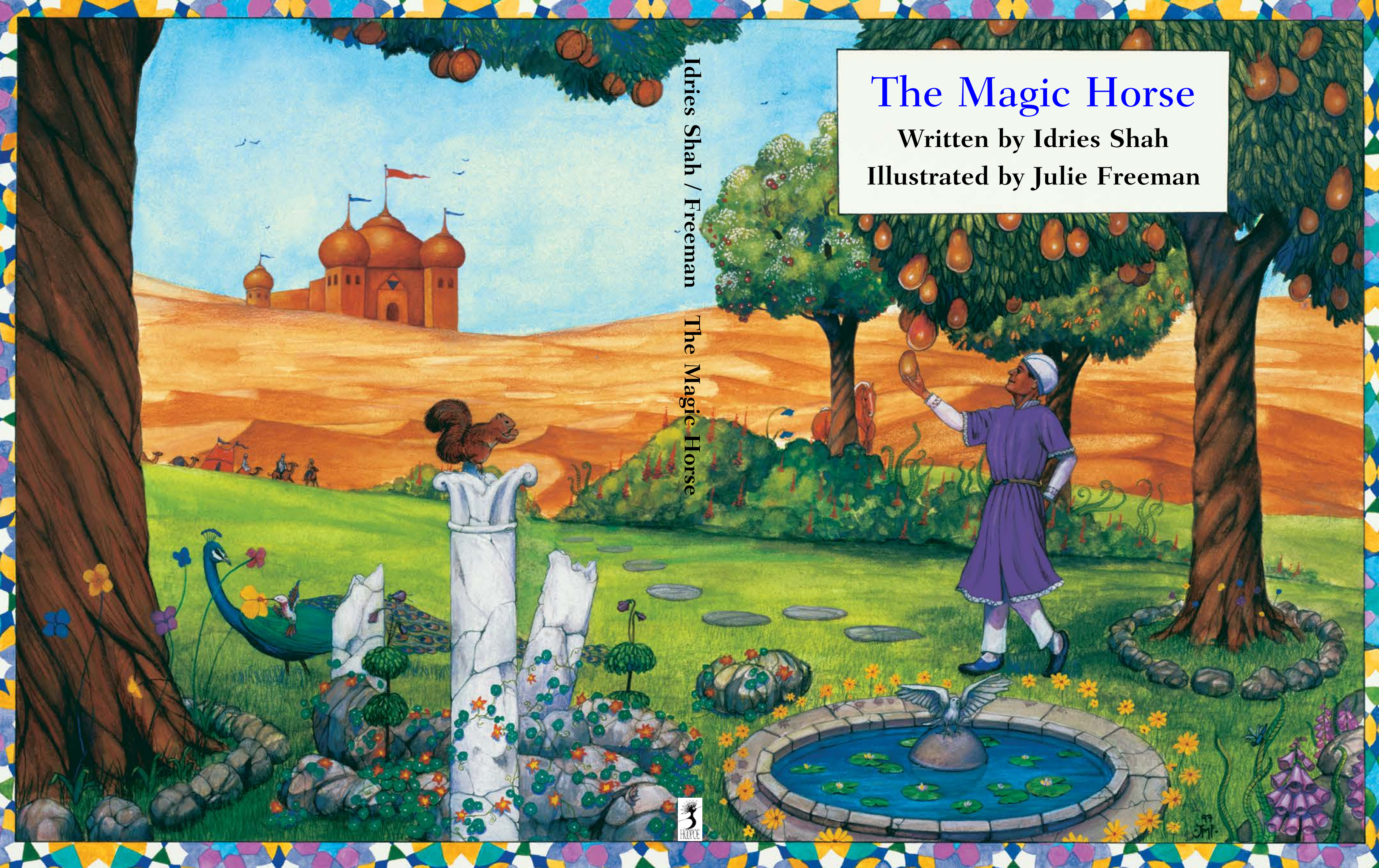


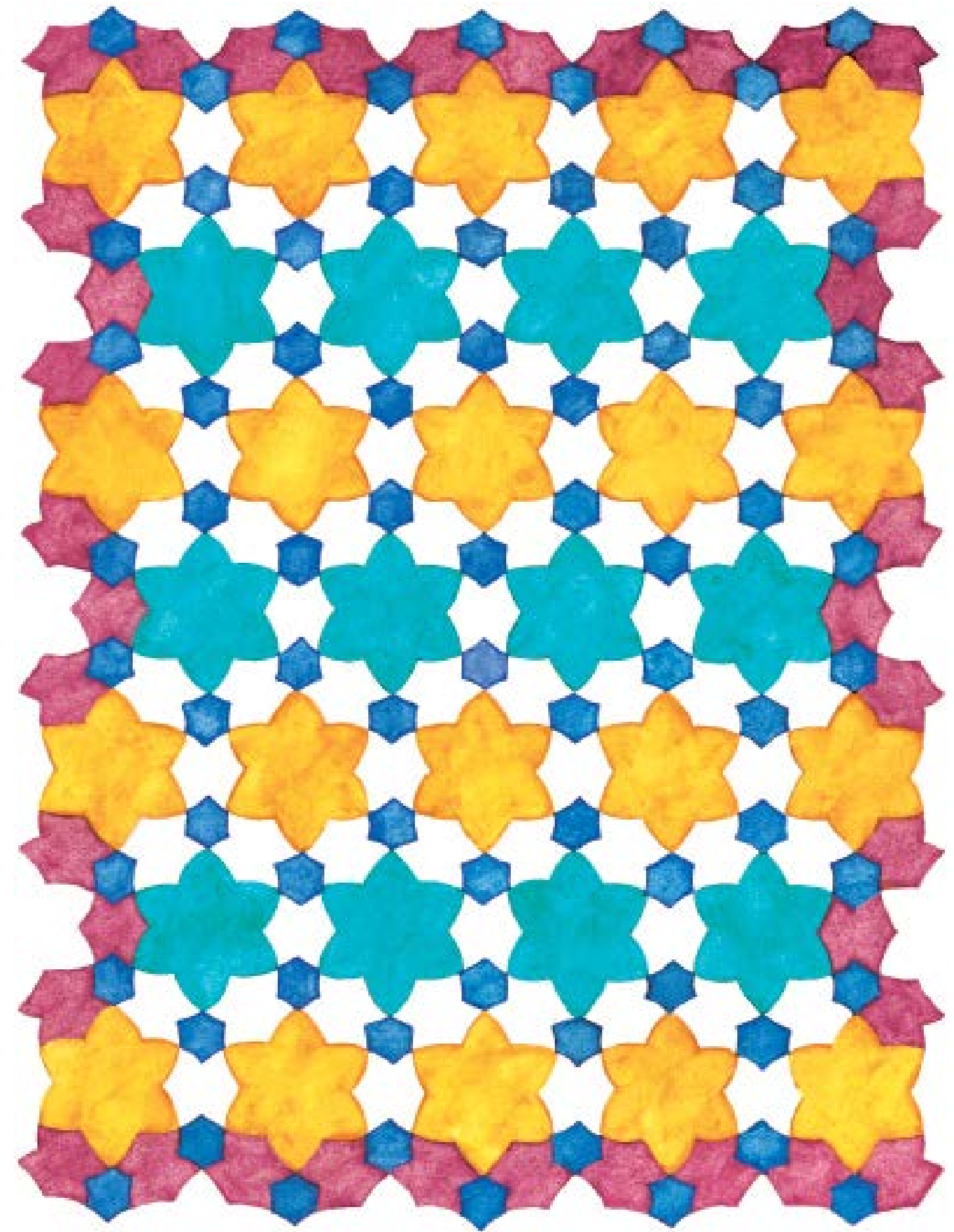
The Magic Horse

Written by Idries Shah

Illustrated by Julie Freeman

Idries Shah / Freeman The Magic Horse





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The original version of *The Magic Horse* was published in 1968
in *Caravan of Dreams* by Idries Shah
published by ISF Publishing, <http://isf-publishing.org>

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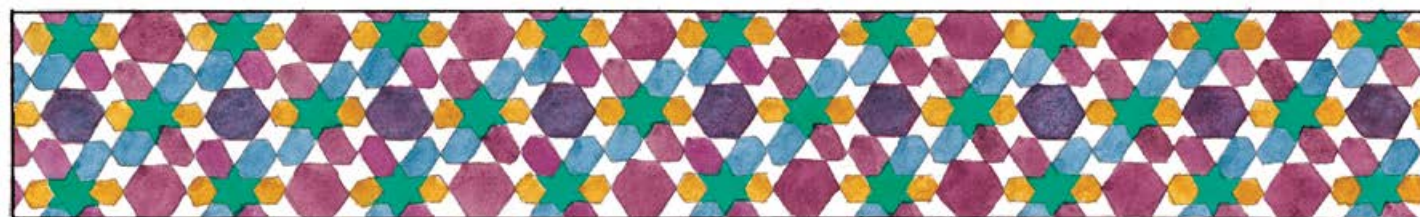
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Shah, Idries, 1924-
The magic horse / by Idries Shah; illustrated by Julie Freeman.
p. cm.
Summary: A teaching tale in which two very different princes find their hearts' desires: one in a wondrous, mechanical fish, the other in a magical wooden horse.
ISBN-1-883536-11-1 (hdbk.)
[1. Folklore.] I. Freeman, Julie, ill. II. Title.
PZ8.1.S47Mag 1997
[398.22]-dc21
97-5086

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THE TEACHING STORY

The Magic Horse is one of the hundreds of stories collected by Idries Shah.

In the Sufi tradition there is a continuum between the children's story, the entertainment or folklore story, and the instructional or instrumental story. A story can help children deal with difficult situations and give them something to hold on to. It can, at the same time, stimulate a deeper understanding in adults.

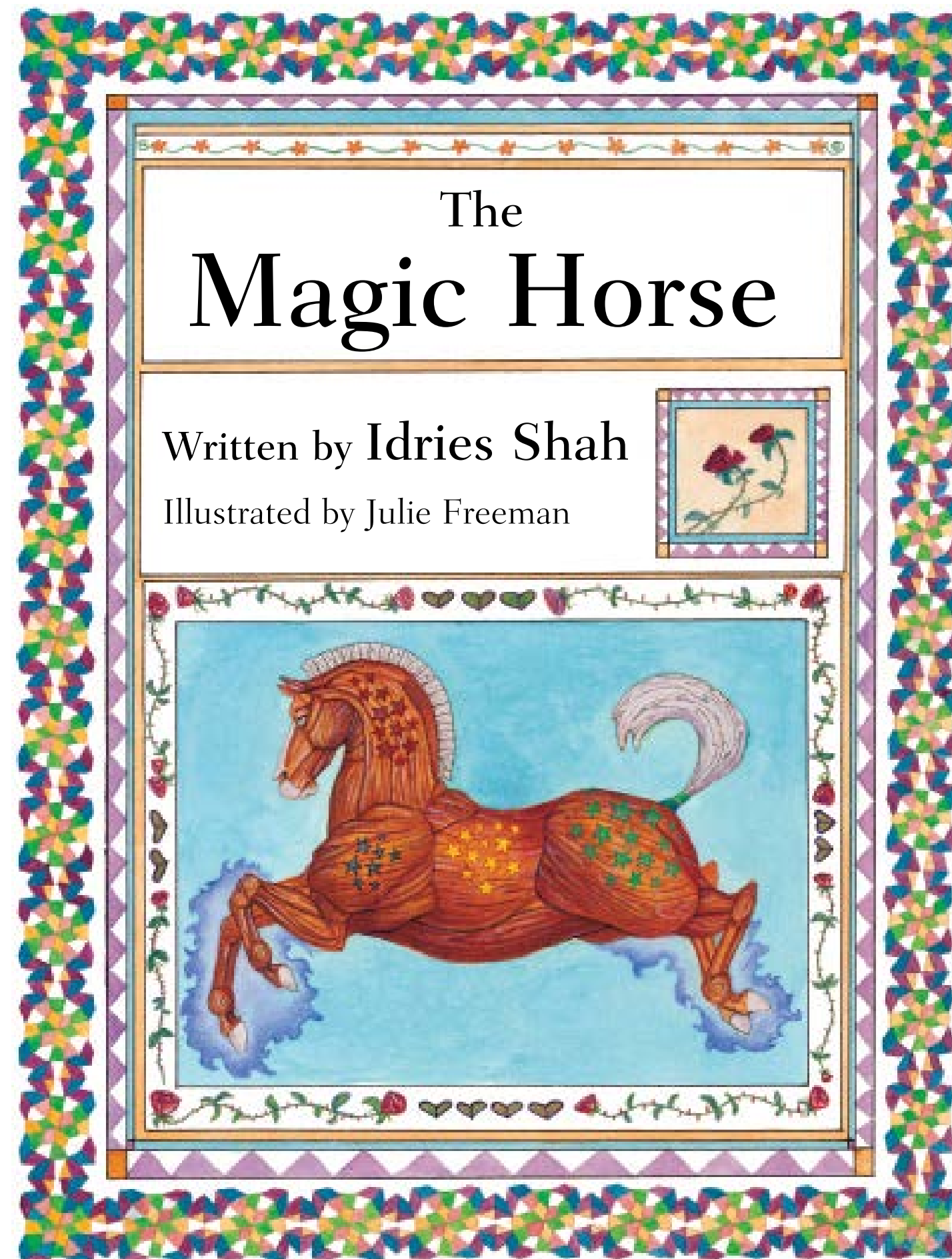
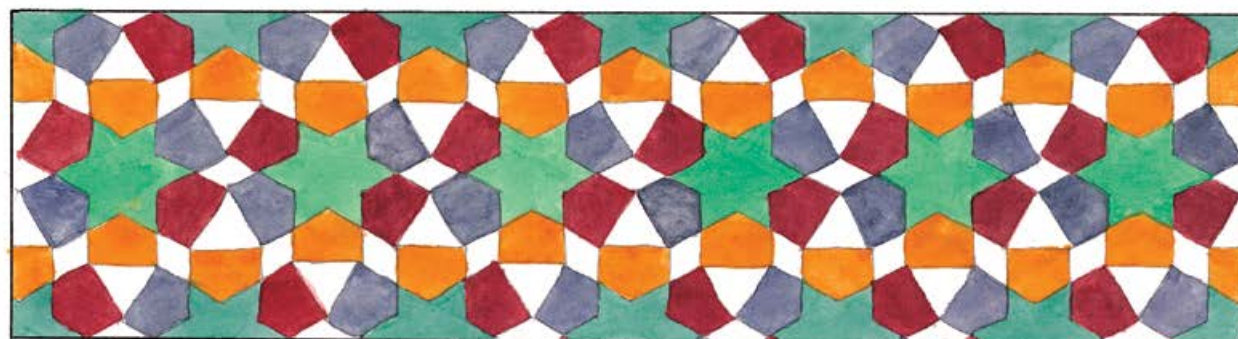
Through the instrumental function of this rich body of oral and written material, we and our children can now learn to develop the capacity to be more flexible and to understand many more things about ourselves and about life.

For Idries Shah's titles for younger readers visit:

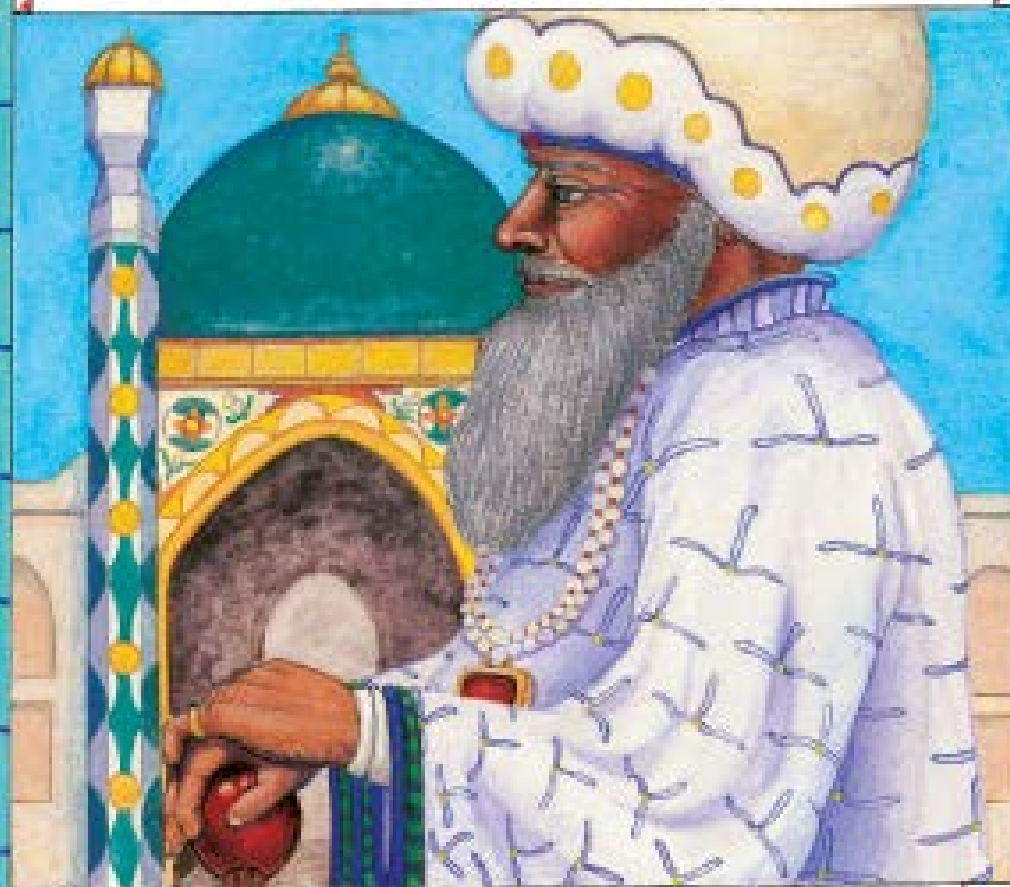
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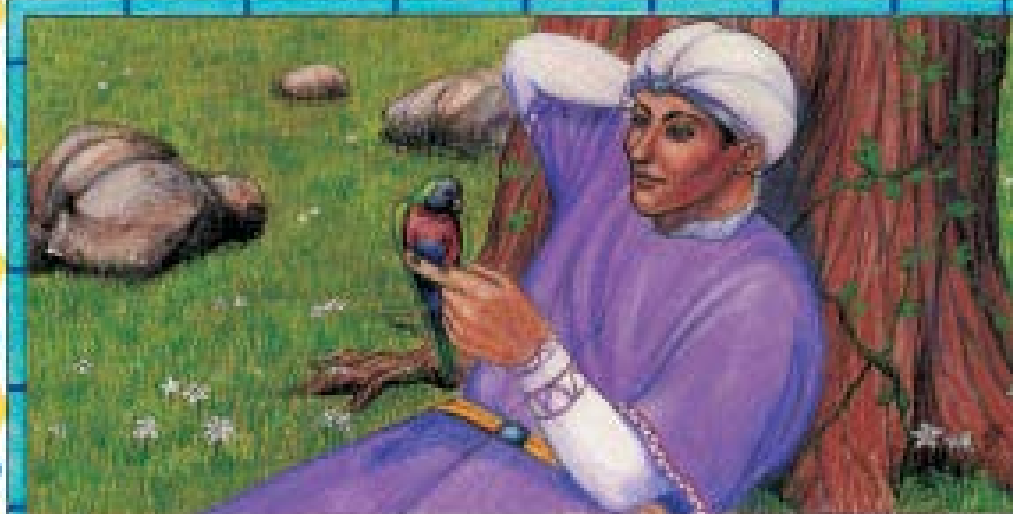
www.idriesshahfoundation.org



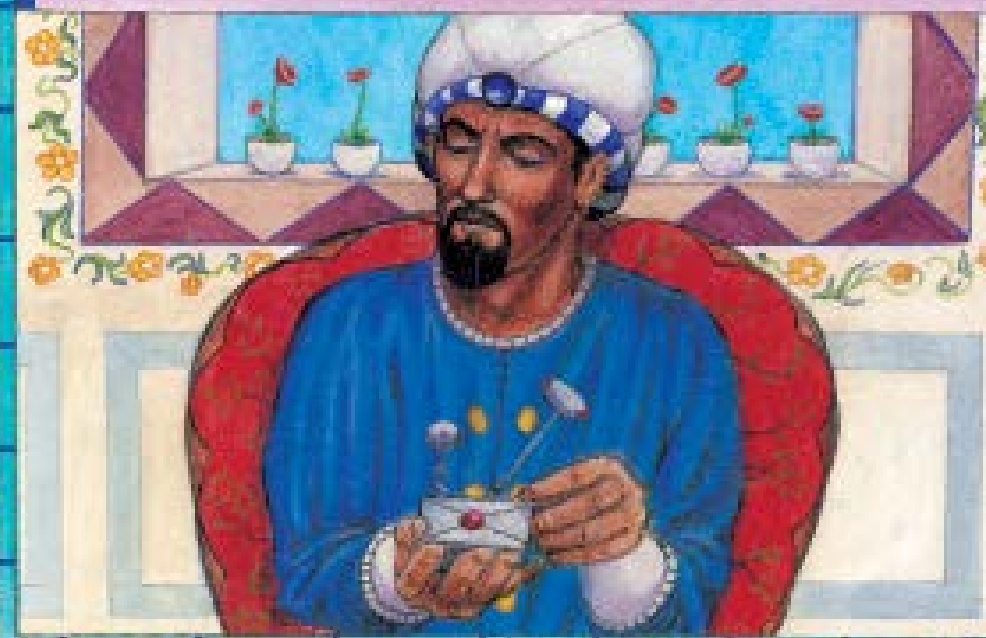
Once upon a time - not so very long ago - there was a land in which the people were very prosperous. They had made all kinds of discoveries in the growing of plants, in harvesting and preserving fruits, in making objects for sale to other countries, and in many other practical arts.



Their ruler was unusually enlightened, and he encouraged new discoveries and activities because he knew they would help his people.

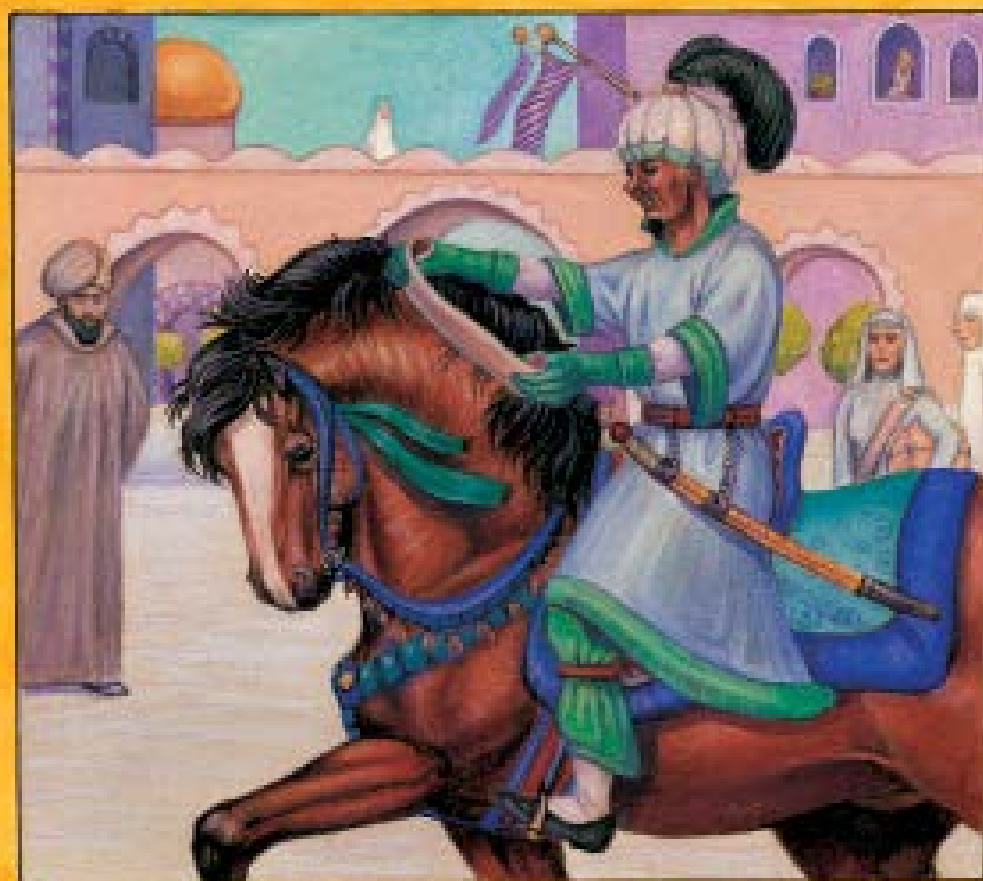


He had two sons, Tambal and Hoshyar. Hoshyar was expert in using strange devices. Tambal was a dreamer who seemed interested only in things which were of little value in the eyes of the citizens.

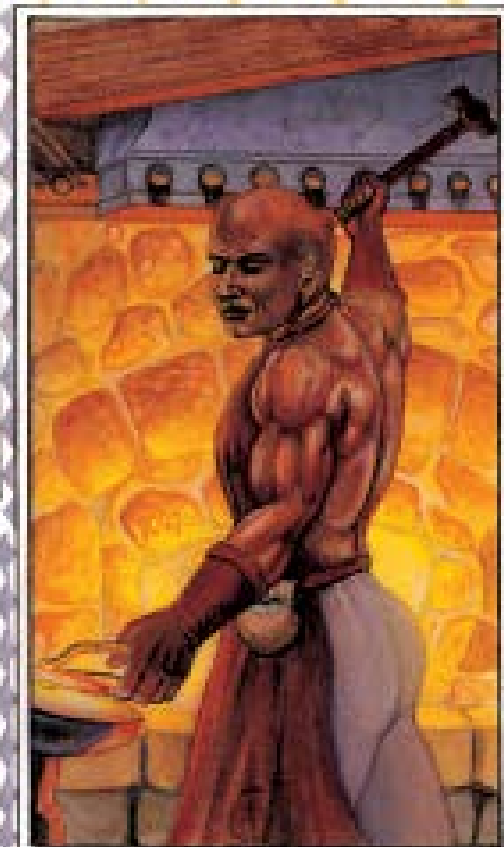
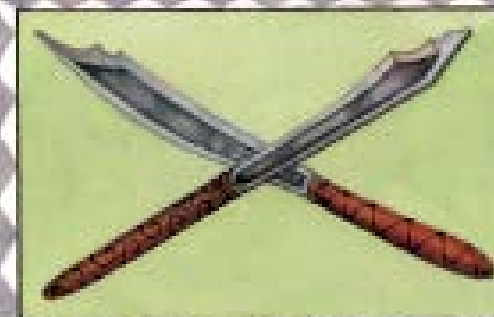
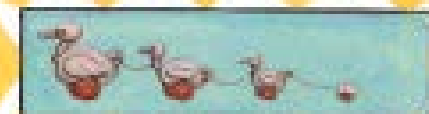
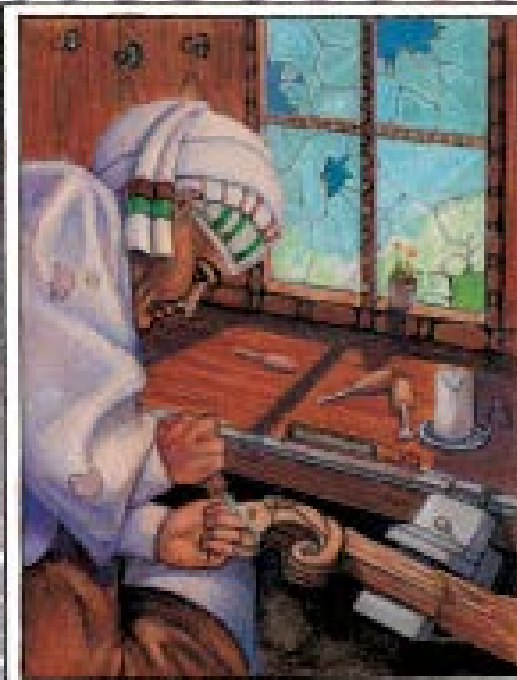


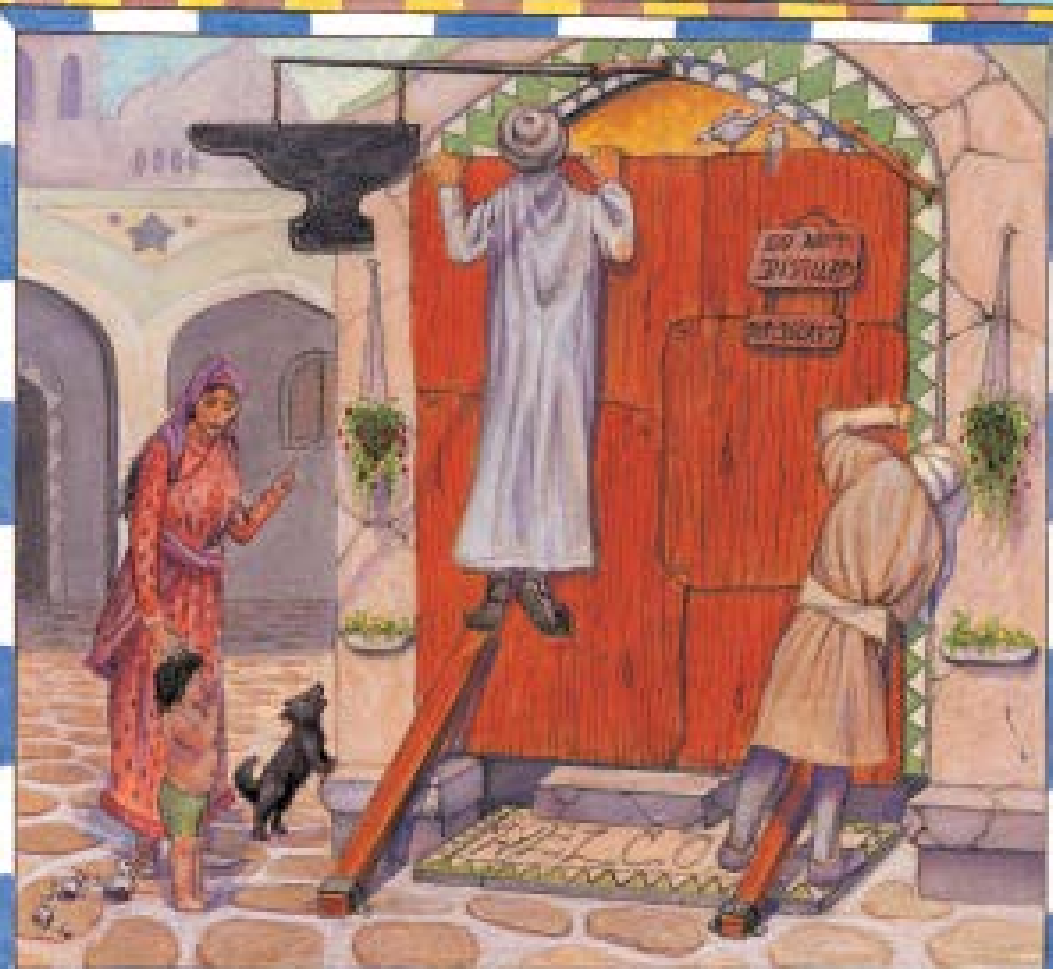
From time to time the king, whose name was King Mumkin, would make this announcement:

“Let all those who have interesting and useful devices present them to the palace for examination so that they may be rewarded.”



Now there were two men of that country, an ironsmith and a woodworker, who were great rivals in most things, and each delighted in making strange contraptions. When they heard this announcement one day, they agreed to compete for an award so that their relative merits could be decided once and for all, and recognized in public by the king.





The ironsmith worked day and night on a mighty engine with the help of many talented specialists. And he surrounded his workshop with high walls to keep his work secret.

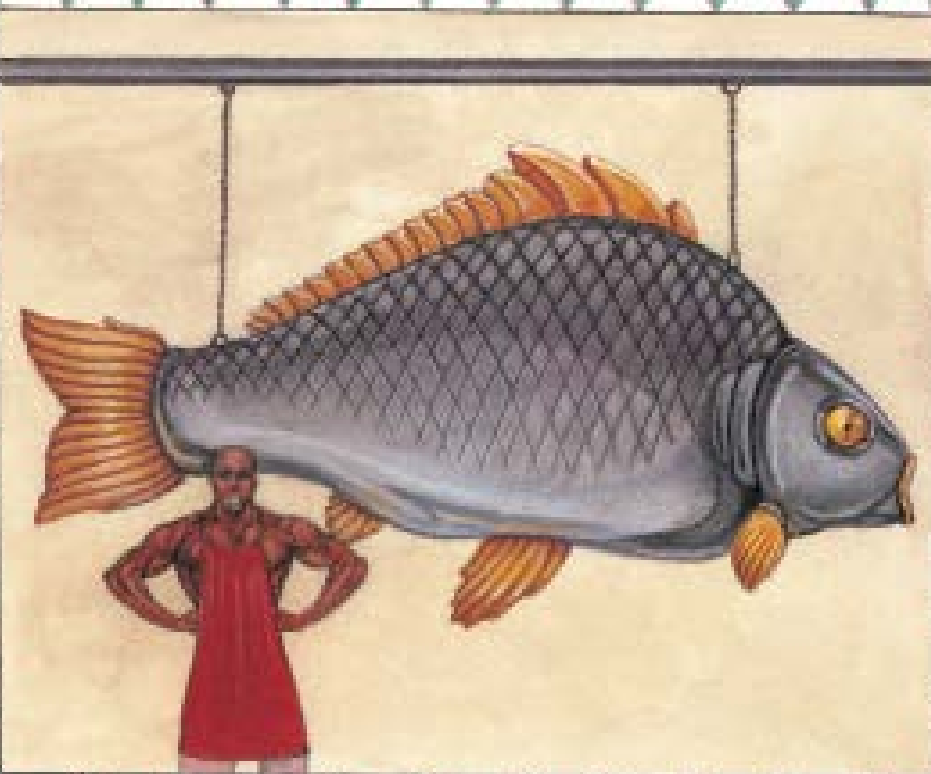


The woodworker took his simple tools and went into a forest where, after long and solitary reflection, he prepared his own masterpiece.

News of the rivalry spread, and people thought that the ironsmith would easily win, for his cunning works had been seen before, and while the woodworker's products were admired, they were not very useful.

When both were ready, the king received them in court.





The ironsmith produced an immense metallic fish which, he said, could swim in and under the water, carry freight over the land, burrow into the earth, and even fly slowly through the air. At first the court found it hard to believe that there could be such a wonder made by man, but when the ironsmith and his assistants demonstrated it, the king was overjoyed.



He gave the ironsmith great honors, a special rank, and the title “Benefactor of the Community.”

Prince Hoshyar was placed in charge of making more of the wondrous fishes and making them available to everyone. The people blessed the ironsmith and Hoshyar, as well as the kind and wise monarch whom they loved so much.

In the excitement, the humble carpenter had been all but forgotten. Then one day someone said, “But what about the contest? Where is the entry of the woodworker? We all know him to be a clever man. Perhaps he has produced something useful.”

“How could anything be as useful as the wondrous fishes?” asked Hoshyar. And many of the people agreed with him.



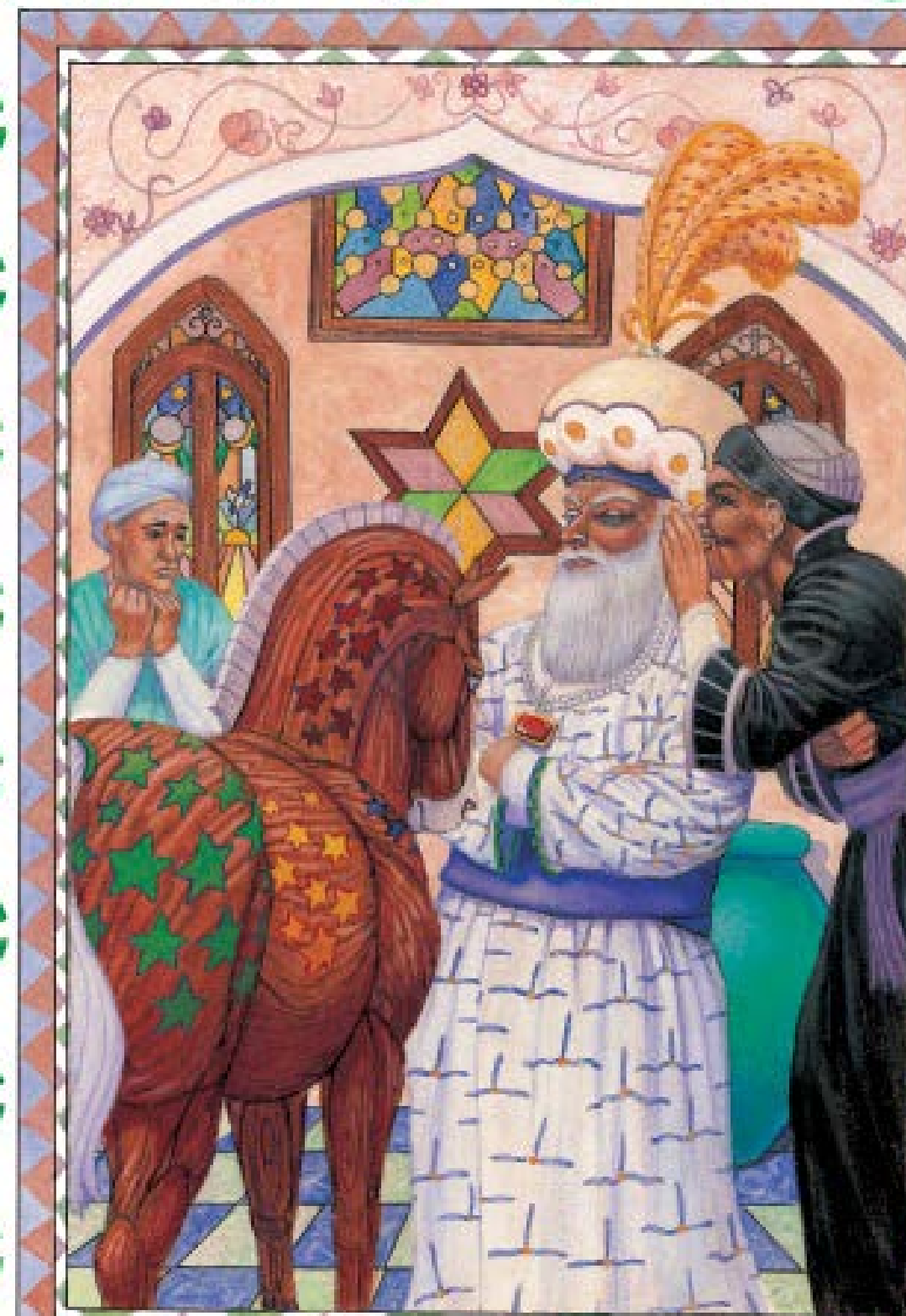
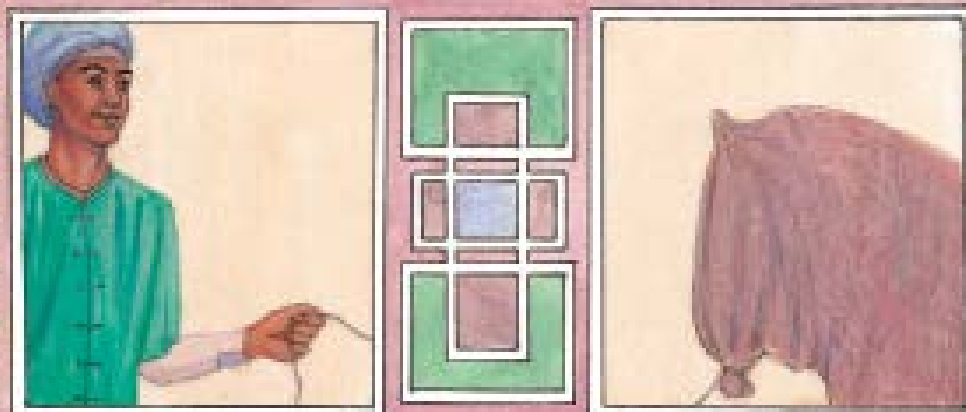
But one day the king was bored. He had grown tired of the fishes and the reports of their wonders which they so regularly performed. He said, "Call the woodcarver, for I would now like to see what he has made."

The simple woodcarver came into the throne-room, carrying a parcel wrapped in coarse cloth. As the whole court craned forward to see what he had, he took off the covering to reveal - a wooden horse. It was beautifully carved and decorated with colored paints, but the king snapped, "It's a mere plaything!"

"But, Father," said Prince Tambal, "let us ask the man what it is for."

"Very well," said the king. "What is it for?"

"Your Majesty," stammered the woodcarver, "it is a magic horse. It does not look impressive, but it has its own inner senses. Unlike the fish, which has to be directed, this horse can interpret the desires of the rider and carry him wherever he needs to go."

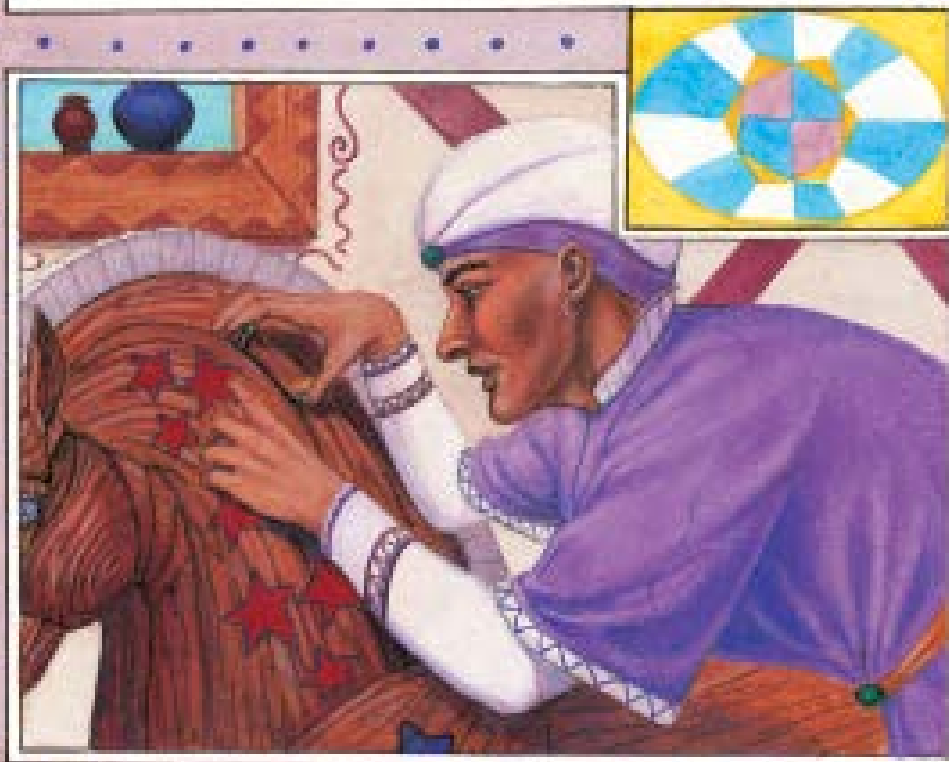


“Such a silly thing is fit only for Tambal,” murmured the chief minister at the king’s elbow. “It cannot compare to the wondrous fish.”

The woodcarver was preparing sadly to depart when Tambal said, “Father, let me have the wooden horse.”

“All right,” said the king, “give it to him. Take the woodcarver away and tie him to a tree so that he will realize that our time is valuable. Let him think about how rich the wondrous fish has made us, and perhaps when he has had time to think about how to really work, we shall let him go free to practice what he has learnt.”

The woodcarver was taken away, and Prince Tambal left the court carrying the magic horse.



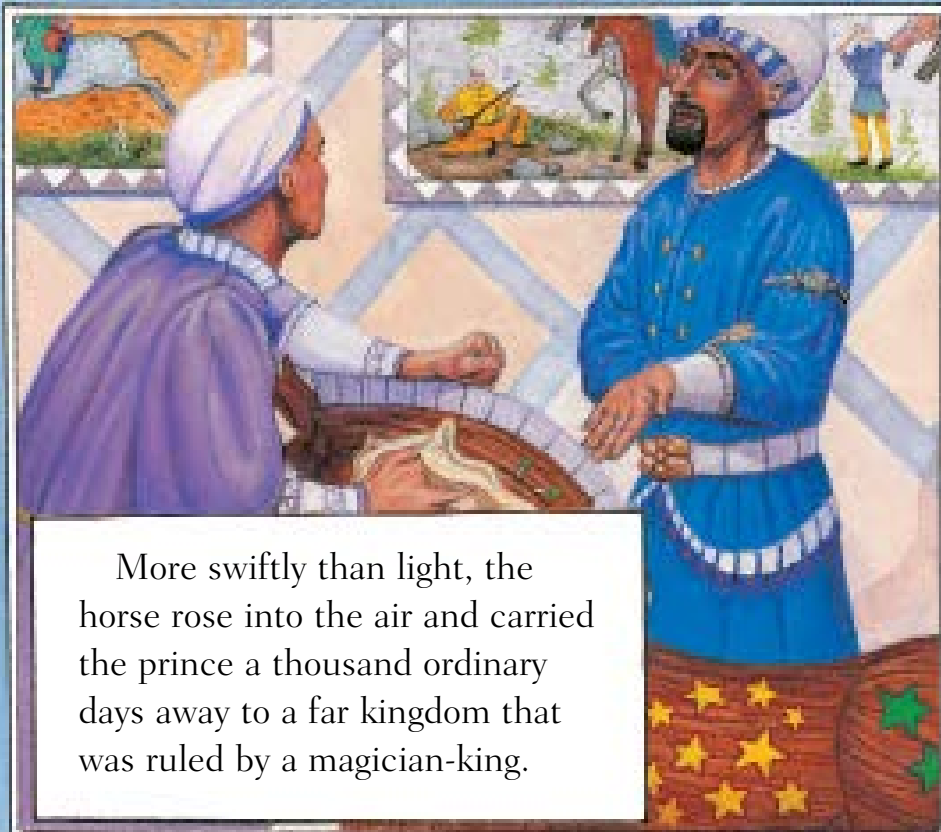
Tambal took the horse to his rooms, and he discovered that it had several knobs, cleverly concealed in the carved designs. When these were turned in a certain manner, the horse - and anyone mounted on it - rose into the air and sped to whatever place was in the mind of the person who moved the knobs.

In this way, day after day, Tambal flew to places he had never visited before, and he came to know a great many things. He took the horse with him everywhere.

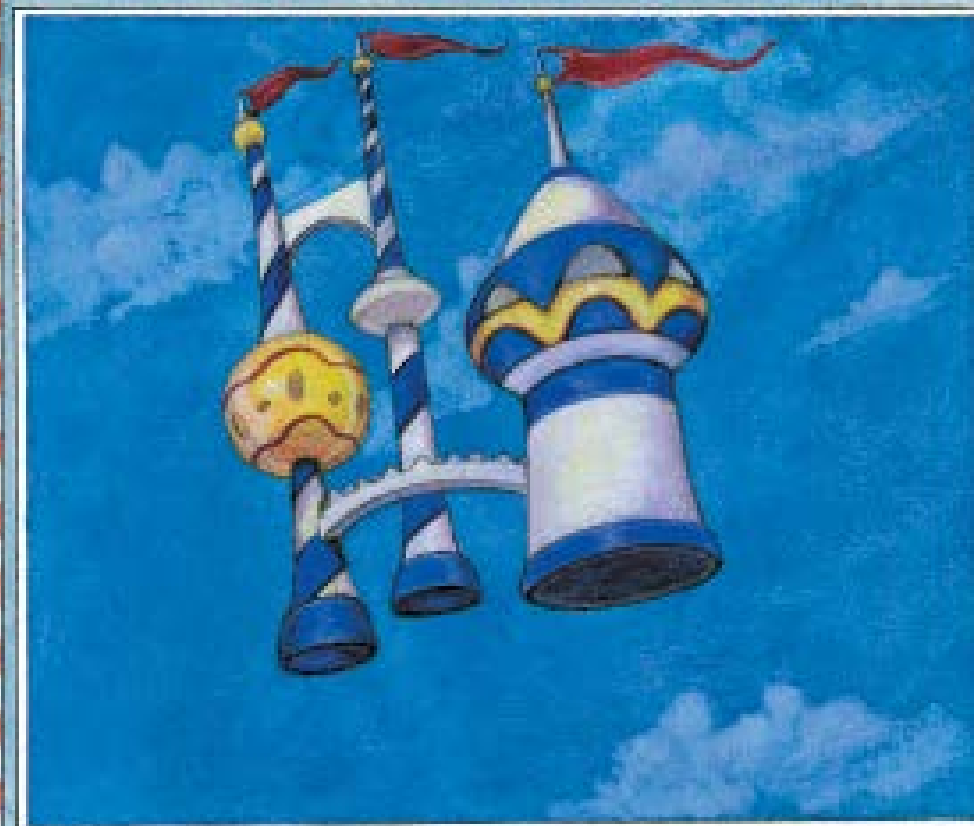
One day he met Hoshiyar, who said to him, "Carrying a wooden horse is just the thing for someone like you. As for me, I am working for the good of all, towards my heart's desire!"

Tambal thought, "I wish I knew what the good of all is. And I wish I could know what my heart's desire is."

When he was next in his room, he sat upon the horse, turned the knobs, and thought, "I would like to find my heart's desire."



More swiftly than light, the horse rose into the air and carried the prince a thousand ordinary days away to a far kingdom that was ruled by a magician-king.



The king, whose name was Kahana, had a beautiful daughter called Precious Pearl. In order to protect her, he had imprisoned her in a palace that wheeled in the sky, higher than any mortal could reach. As Tambal was approaching the magic land, he saw the glittering palace in the heavens, and he alighted there.

The princess and the young horseman met and fell in love.

“My father will never allow us to marry,” she said, “for he has commanded that I must marry the son of another magician-king who lives across the cold desert to the east of our homeland. He wants to unify the two kingdoms by this marriage, and no one dares to disobey him.”

“I will go to him and try to reason with him,” said Tambal, mounting the magic horse.



But when he descended into the magic land, there were so many new and exciting things to see that he did not hurry to the palace. When he finally arrived, the drum at the gate was beating, which meant that the king was absent. Tambal asked when the king would return.

“He has gone to visit his daughter in the Whirling Palace,” said a man on the street, “and he usually spends several hours with her.”

Tambal went to a quiet place where he willed the horse to carry him to the king's private apartment. “I will approach him in his own home,” he thought to himself, “for if I go to the Whirling Palace without his permission, he may be angry.”

When he got to the king's apartment, he hid behind some curtains and lay down to sleep.



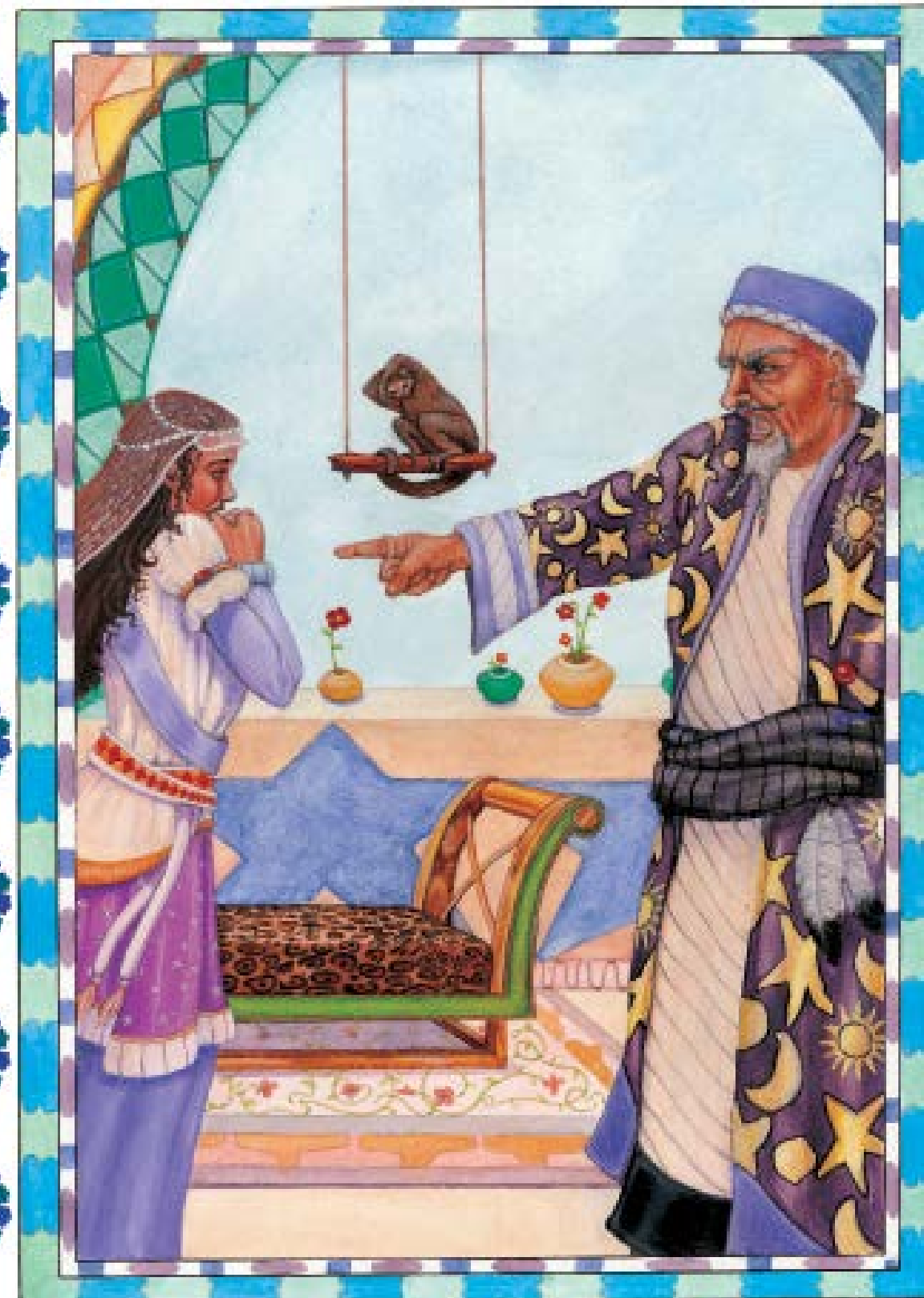
Meanwhile, unable to keep her secret, Princess Precious Pearl had confessed to her father that a man on a flying horse had visited her and wanted to marry her. King Kahana was furious.

He placed sentries around the Whirling Palace and returned to his own apartment to think things over. As soon as he entered his bedchamber, one of his tongueless magic servants guarding it pointed to the wooden horse lying in a corner. "Aha!" exclaimed the magician-king. "Now I have him. Let us look at this horse and see what manner of thing it may be."

As he and his servants were examining the horse, the prince slipped away and hid in another part of the palace.

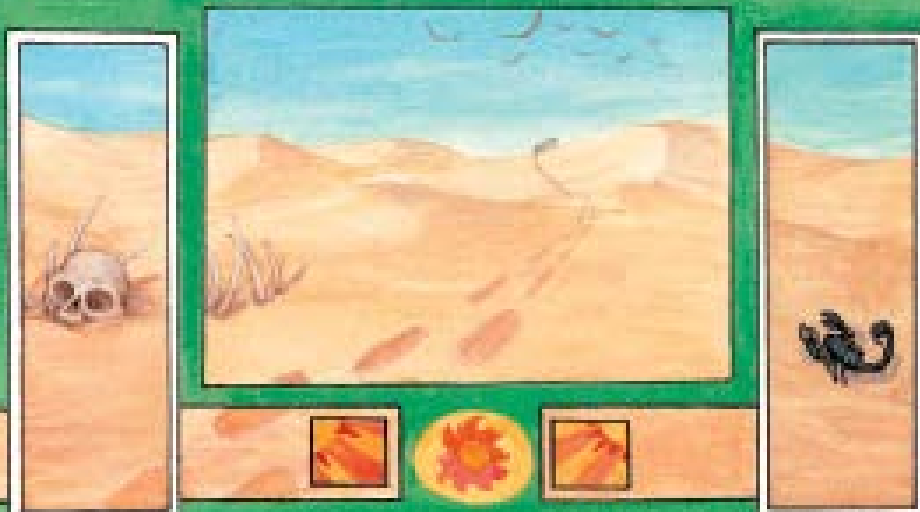
The king twisted the knobs, tapped the horse, and tried to understand how it worked, but he was baffled. "Take that thing away," he said. "It has no use now, if it ever had any. It is just a toy, fit only for children."

And so the horse was put into a cupboard.



Now King Kahana thought that he should arrange his daughter's wedding without delay in case the man with the horse had other ways to win her. So he called her to his palace and sent a message to the other magician-king, whose son was to marry Princess Precious Pearl, asking that the prince be sent to claim his bride.

Meanwhile, Prince Tambal escaped from the palace when the guards were asleep and decided to return to his own country. His quest for his heart's desire now seemed almost hopeless, but he said to himself, "If it takes the rest of my life, I shall return with troops to take this kingdom by force. I can do that only by convincing my father that I must have his help to attain my heart's desire."

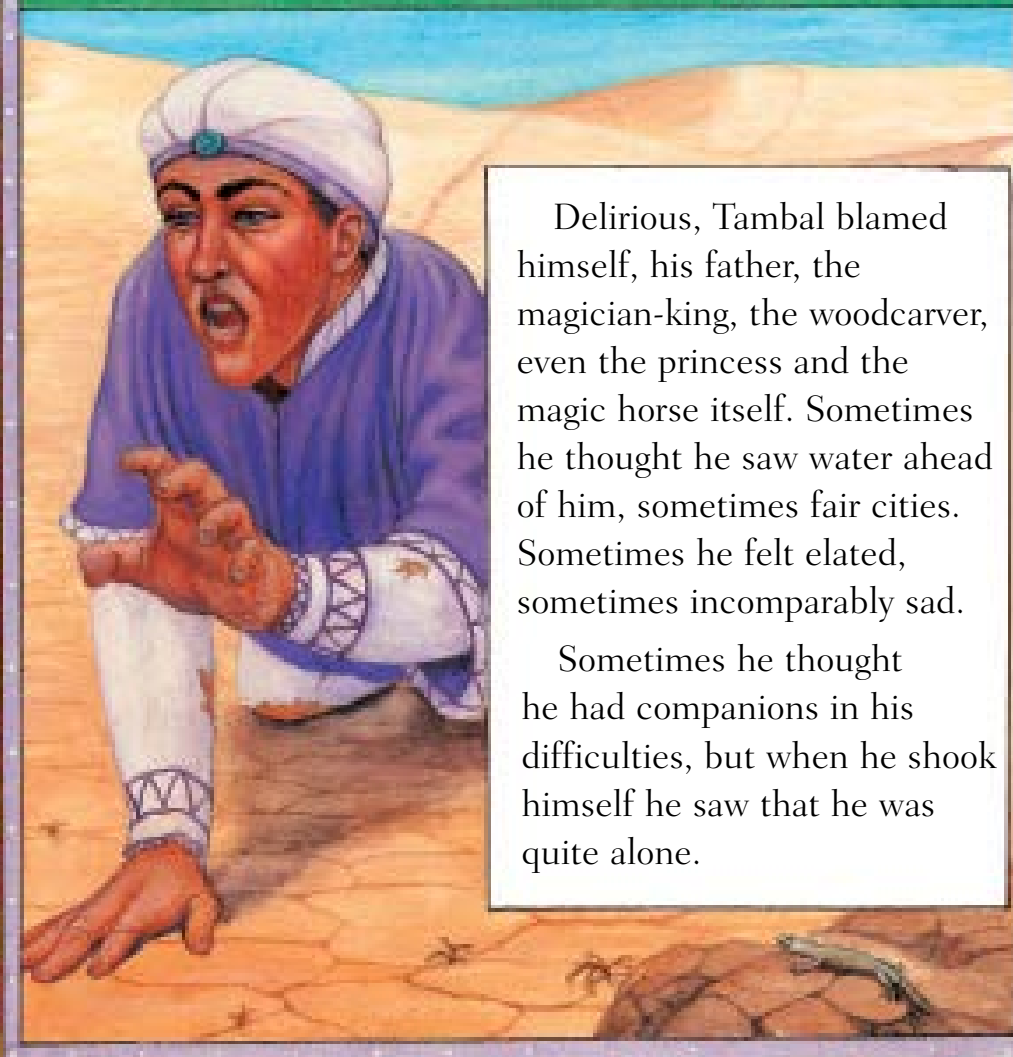


So saying, he set off. Never was a man worse equipped for such a journey. An alien, traveling on foot, without any kind of provisions, facing pitiless heat, freezing nights, and sandstorms, he soon became hopelessly lost in the desert.



Delirious, Tambal blamed himself, his father, the magician-king, the woodcarver, even the princess and the magic horse itself. Sometimes he thought he saw water ahead of him, sometimes fair cities. Sometimes he felt elated, sometimes incomparably sad.

Sometimes he thought he had companions in his difficulties, but when he shook himself he saw that he was quite alone.





He felt that he had been traveling for an eternity. Suddenly, when he had given up and started again several times, he saw something right in front of him that at first looked like a mirage. It was a garden full of delicious fruits that sparkled and beckoned him to come closer.

At first Tambal did not take much notice and continued walking, but soon he realized that he was passing through such a garden. He gathered some of the fruits and tasted them cautiously. They were delicious. They took away his fear as well as his hunger and thirst. When he was full, he lay down in the shade of a huge, welcoming tree and fell asleep.

When he woke up he felt well enough, but something seemed to be wrong. Running to a nearby pool, he looked at his reflection in the water. Staring up at him was a horrible sight. He saw a long beard, curved horns, and ears a foot long. He looked down at his hands. They were covered with fur.

Was it a nightmare? Pinching and beating himself, he tried to wake up. But it was no use. Beside himself with fear and horror, screaming and sobbing, he threw himself on the ground. "Whether I live or die," he thought, "these fruits have ruined me. Even with the greatest army of all time, conquest will not help me. Nobody would marry me now, especially not Princess Precious Pearl. Even beasts would be terrified at the sight of me, and my heart's desire would surely reject me!" And he lost consciousness.



When he woke again, in the dark, he saw a light approaching through the groves of silent trees. Fear and hope struggled in him. As the light came closer, he saw that it was a lamp enclosed in a brilliant starlike shape. The lamp was carried by a bearded man who walked in the pool of brightness that it cast around.



“My son,” said the man to Tambal, “you have been affected by the influences of this place. If I had not come along, you would have remained just another beast of this enchanted grove, for there are many more like you. But I can help you.”

Tambal wondered whether this man was a fiend in disguise, perhaps the very owner of the evil trees. But, as his sense returned, he realized that he had nothing to lose.

“Help me, Father,” he said.

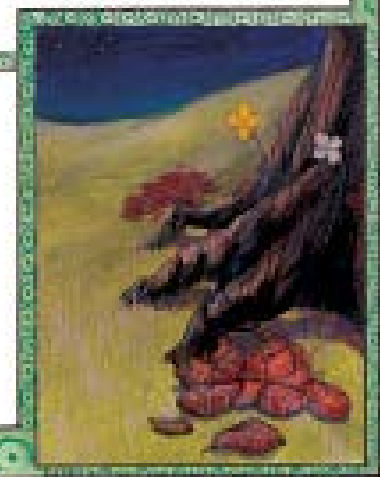
“If you really want your heart’s desire,” said the wise man, “you have only to fix this desire firmly in your mind, not thinking of the fresh, delicious fruit. You must then take up some of the dried fruits that are lying at the foot of all these trees and eat them. Then follow your destiny.”

So saying, he walked away.

As the sage’s light disappeared into the darkness, Tambal saw that the moon was rising, and in its pale light he could see that there were indeed piles of dried fruits under every tree.

He gathered some and ate them as quickly as he could.

Slowly the fur disappeared from his hands and arms. The horns shrank, then vanished. The beard fell away. He was himself again.

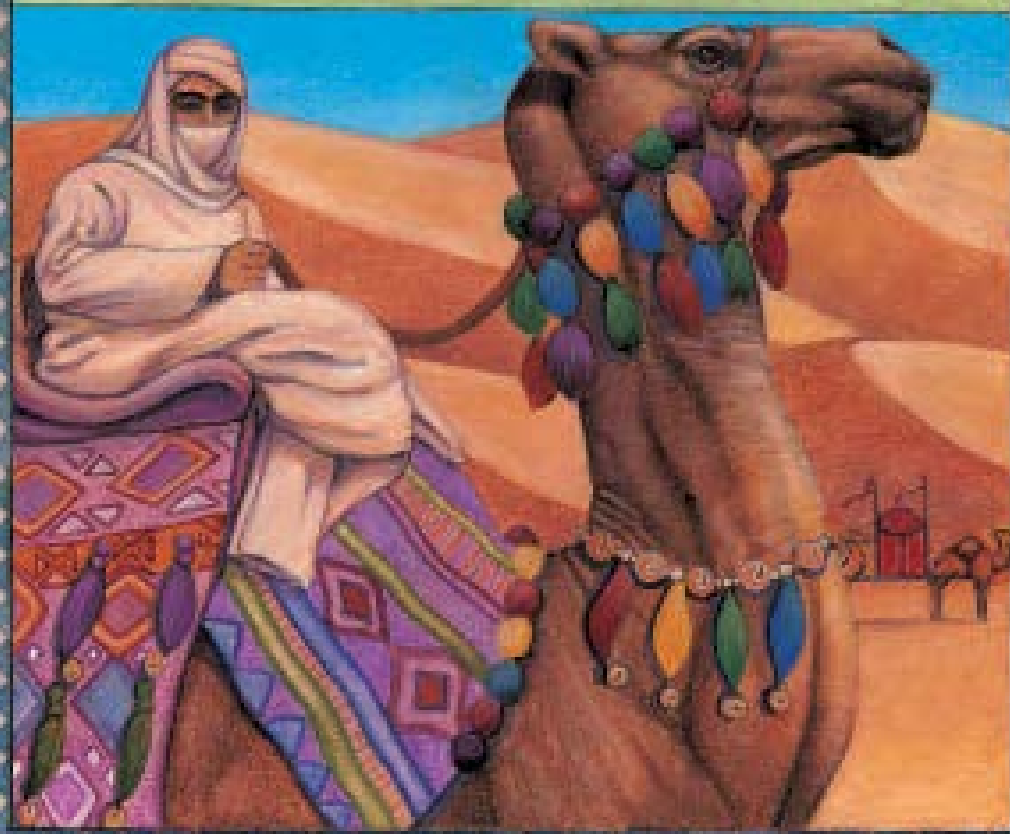


By now it was first light, and in the dawn he heard the tinkling of camel bells. A grand procession was coming through the enchanted forest.

As Tambal stood there, two riders pulled away from the glittering line of people and animals and galloped up to him.

“In the name of the prince, our lord, we demand some of your fruit. His celestial highness is thirsty and has a desire for some of these strange apricots,” said an officer.

Tambal did not move, still numb from his recent experiences.



Now the prince himself came down from his carriage and said, “I am Jadugarzada, son of the magician-king of the East. Here is a bag of gold, oaf. I am having some of your fruit, because I am desirous of it. I am in a hurry to claim my bride, Princess Precious Pearl, daughter of Kahana, magician-king of the West.”

At these words Tambal’s heart turned over. But realizing that this must be the destiny which the sage had told him to follow, he offered the prince as much of the fruit as he could eat.

When the prince had eaten, he began to fall asleep. As he did so, horns, fur and huge ears started to grow out of him. When the soldiers shook him, the prince began to behave in a strange way. He claimed that he was normal, and that *they* were deformed.

The prince’s councilors restrained him and held a hurried debate. Tambal claimed that all would have been well if the prince had not fallen asleep. Finally it was decided to put Tambal in the carriage and have him play the part of the prince. The horned Jadugarzada was tied to a horse with a veil thrown over his face, disguised as a servant woman.

“He may recover his wits eventually,” said the councilors, “and, in any case, he is still our prince. Tambal shall marry the girl. Then, as soon as possible, we shall carry them all back to our own country for our king to solve the problem.”

Tambal, biding his time and following his destiny, agreed to his own part in the masquerade.

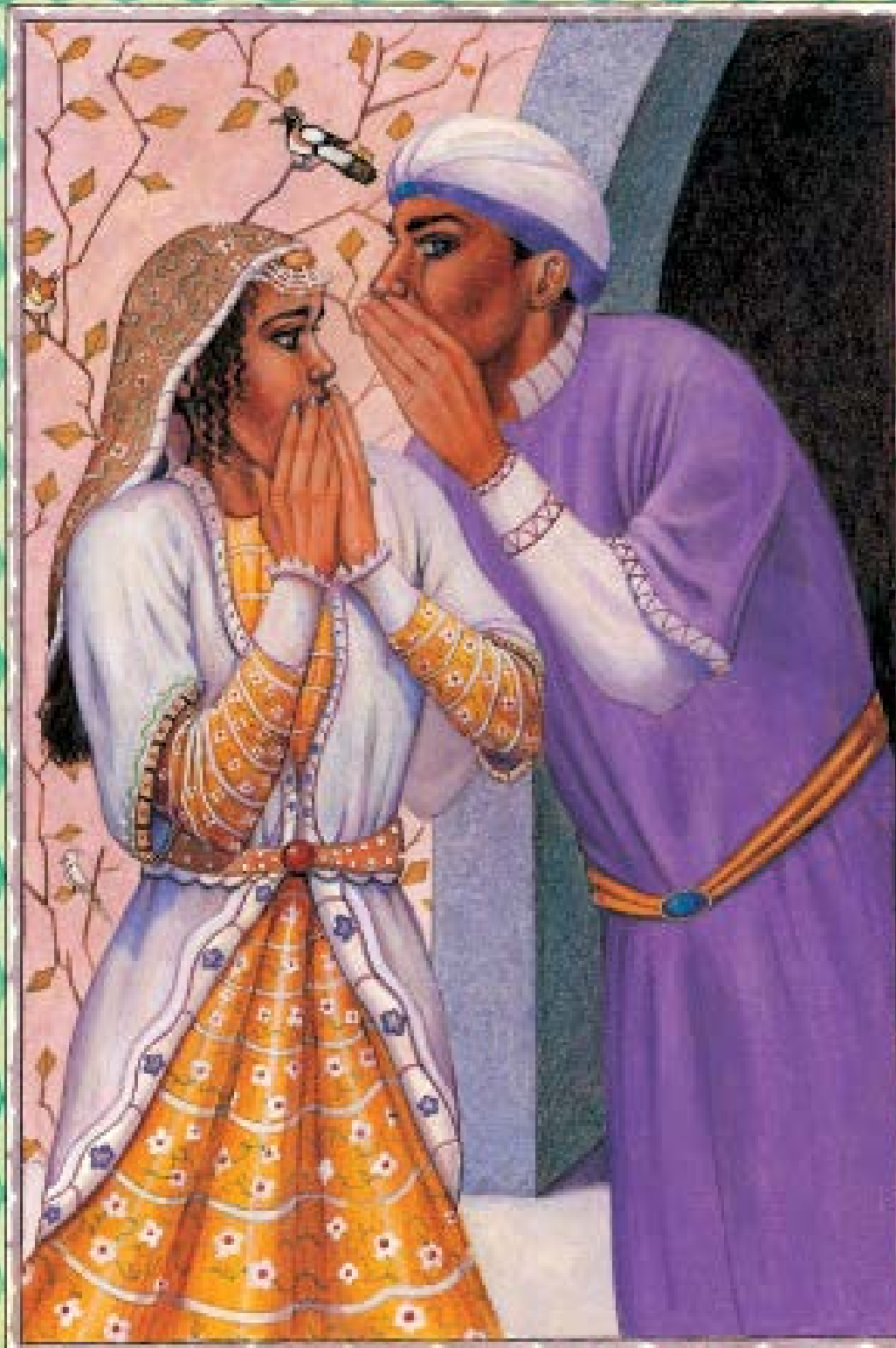


When the party arrived at the capital of the West, the king himself came out to meet them, and Tambal was taken to the princess as her bridegroom. She was so astonished that she nearly fainted, but Tambal whispered quickly what had happened. And so they were married, and the people had a great celebration.

In the meantime the horned prince had half recovered his wits, but not his human form, and his escort still kept him under cover. As soon as the feasting was over, the chief of the horned prince's party (who had been keeping Tambal and the princess under a very close watch) presented himself to the court. He said, "O Just and Glorious Monarch, Fountain of Wisdom, the time has now come, according to the pronouncements of our astrologers and soothsayers, to conduct the bridal pair back to our own land, so that they may be established in their new home under the most felicitous circumstances and influences."

The princess turned to Tambal in alarm, for she knew that as soon as they were on the open road, Jadugarzada would claim her and make an end of Tambal.

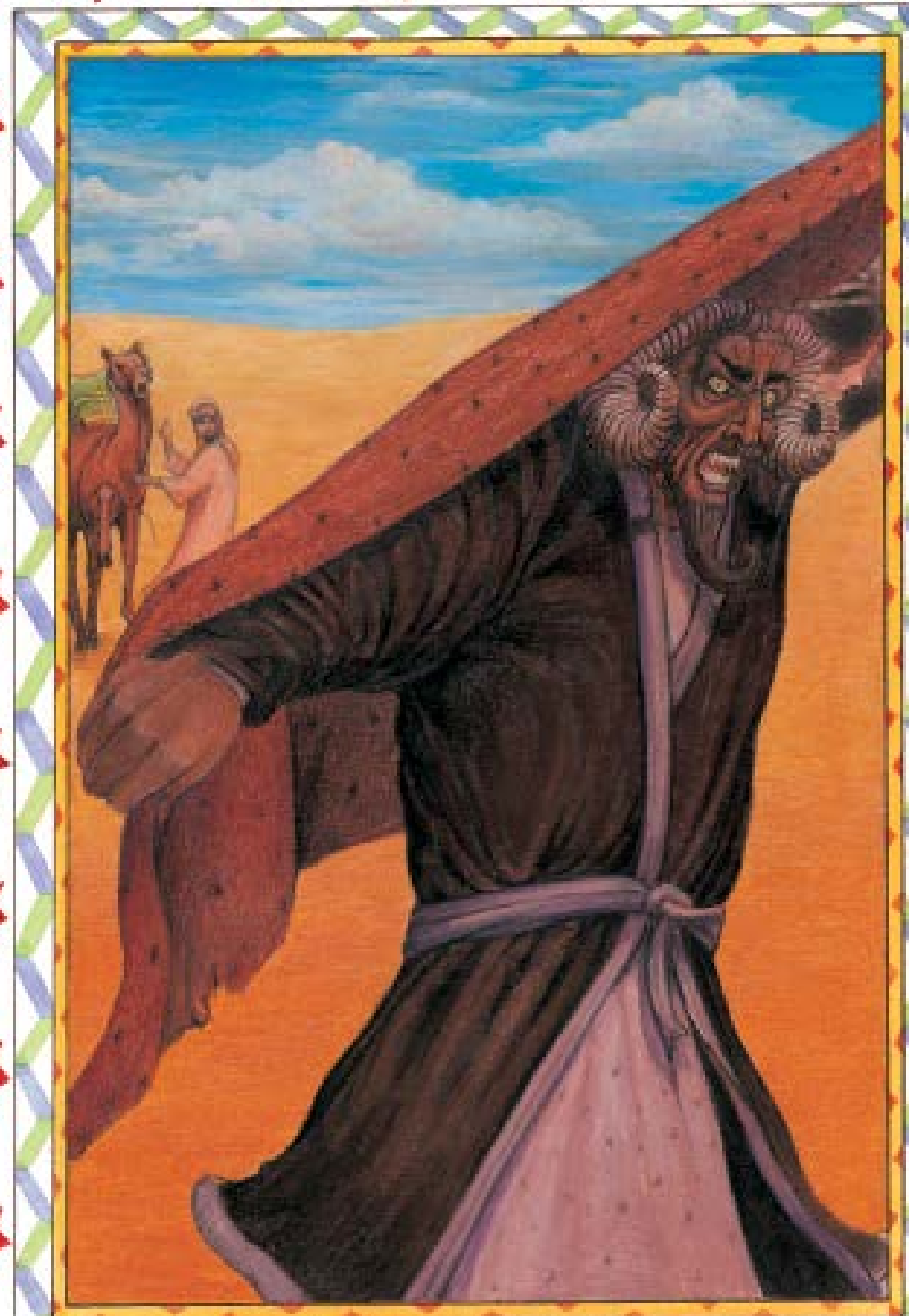
Tambal whispered to her, "Fear nothing. We must act as best we can, following our destiny. Agree to go, but say that you will not travel without the wooden horse."



At first the magician-king was annoyed at this wish of his daughter's. He realized that she wanted the horse because it was connected with her first suitor. But the chief minister of the horned prince said, "Majesty, this is just the desire for a toy, such as any young girl might have. Let her have her plaything so that we may make haste homeward."



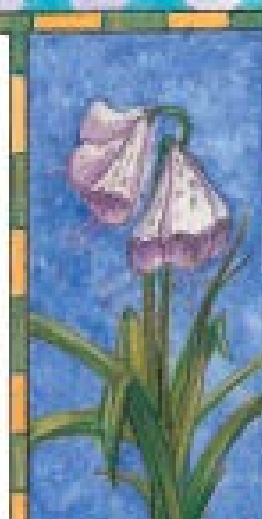
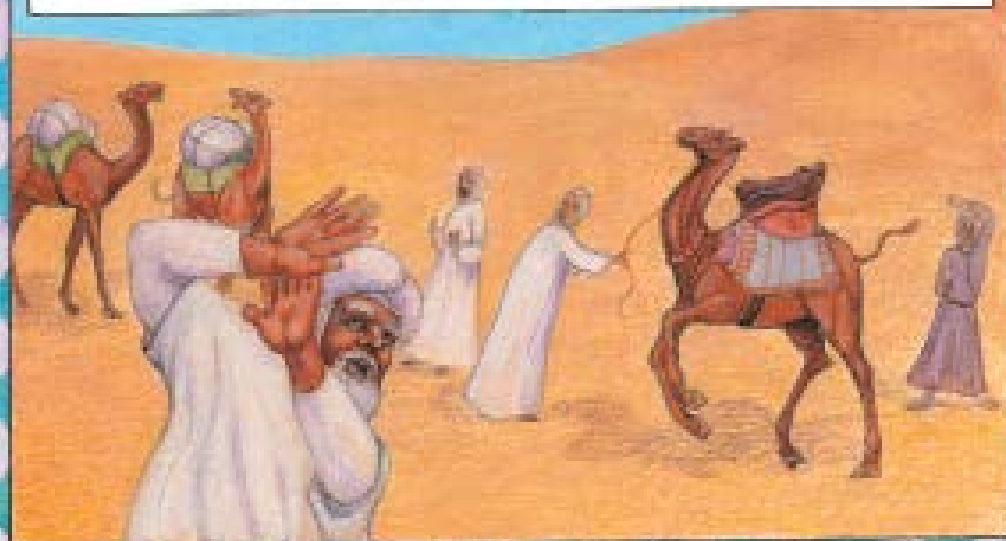
So the magician-king agreed, and soon the splendid procession was on its way. After the king's escort had withdrawn, and before the party stopped for the night, the hideous Jadugarzada threw off his veil and cried out to Tambal, "Miserable author of my misfortunes! I will bind you hand and foot and take you back to my own land. Then you must tell me how to remove this enchantment, or I will have you flayed alive, inch by inch. Now, give me the Princess Precious Pearl!"





Tambal ran to the princess and, in front of the astonished party, rose into the sky on the wooden horse with Precious Pearl mounted behind him.

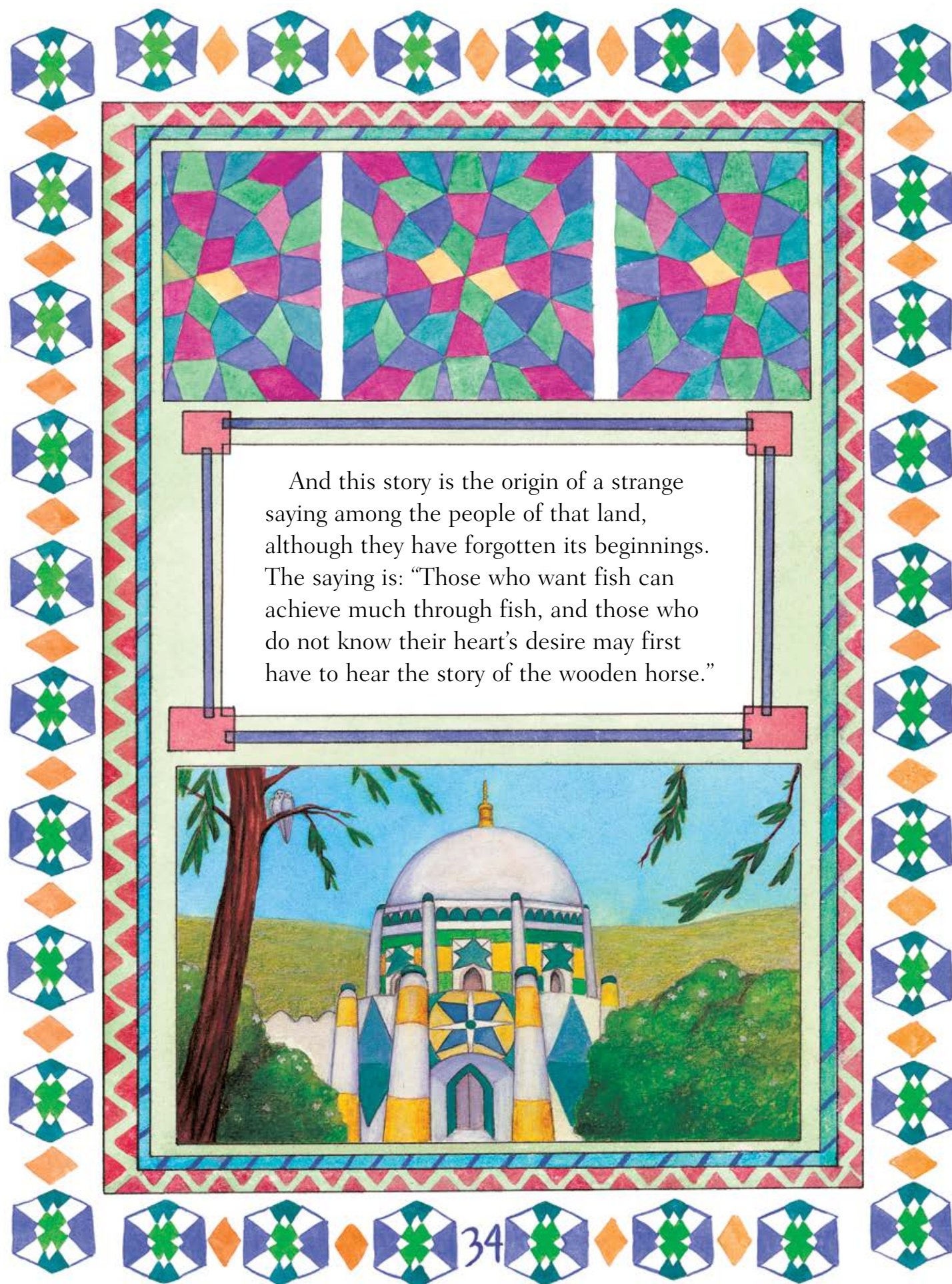
In minutes the couple alighted at the palace of King Mumkin. They related everything that had happened to them, and the king was almost overcome with delight at their safe return. He at once gave orders for the woodcarver to be released, rewarded, and applauded by all the citizens.



When King Mumkin was gathered to his fathers, Princess Precious Pearl and Prince Tambal succeeded him. Prince Hoshiyar was pleased, too, because he was still entranced by the wondrous fish.

“I am glad for your own sakes, if you are happy,” he said to them, “but I think there is nothing more rewarding than my work with the wondrous fish.”





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 The Silly Chicken
 Neem the Half-Boy
 Fatima The Spinner and the Tent

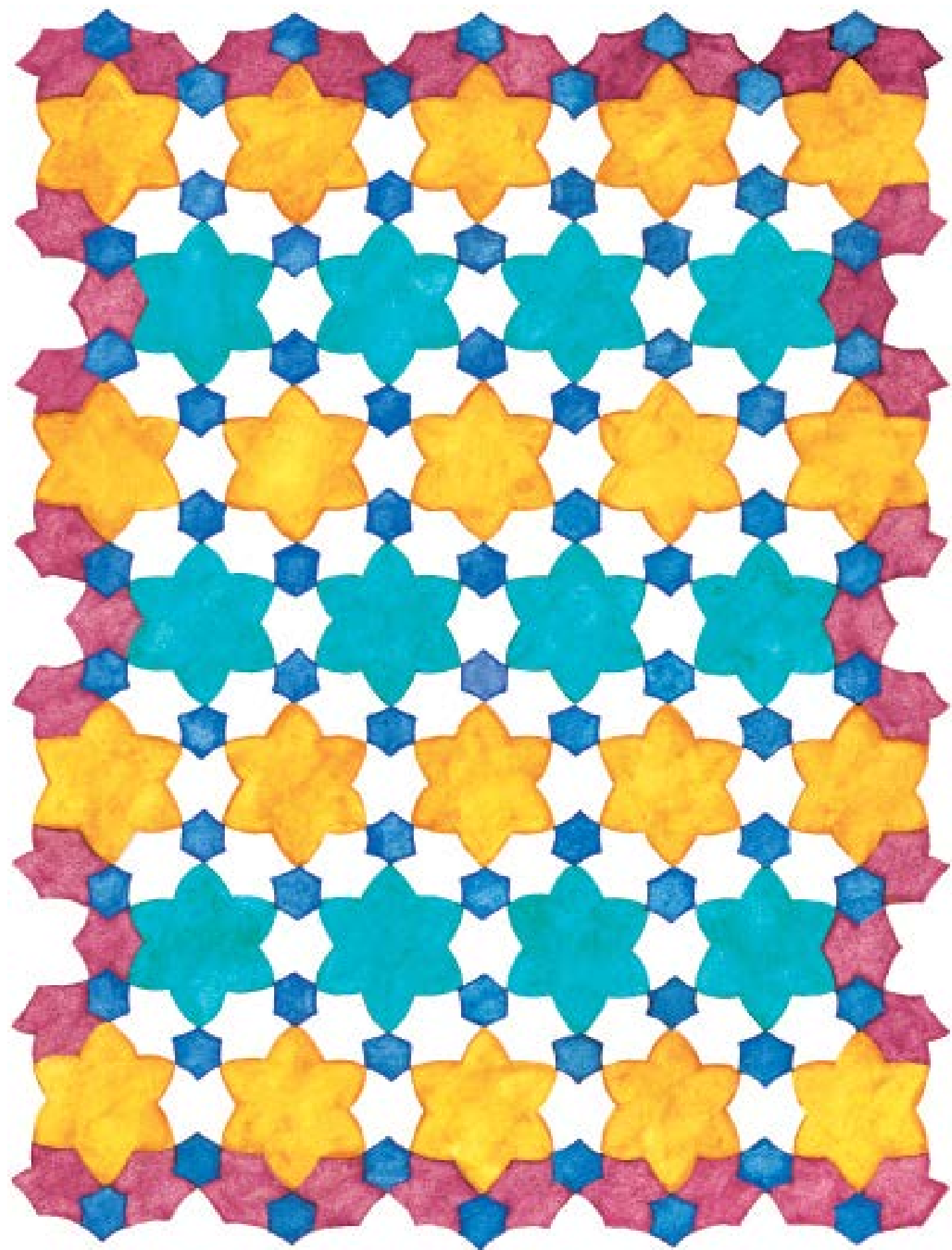
“These Teaching-Stories can be experienced on many levels. A child may simply enjoy hearing them, an adult may analyze them in a more sophisticated way. Both may eventually benefit from the lessons within.”

—Lynn Neary, *All Things Considered*,
 NPR News, Washington

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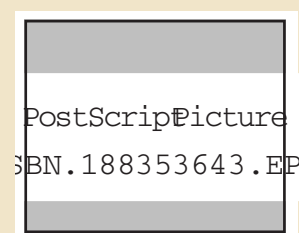
A man tricks a young fox into believing that he will give him a chicken. The fox gets trapped, but through ingenuity and perseverance he manages to escape.

This is one of a series of illustrated books for the young written by the Afghan author Idries Shah, whose collections of narratives and Teaching-Stories™ have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life. It belongs to a rich tradition of storytelling from Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Middle East that is more than a thousand years old.

Teaching-Stories are designed specifically to foster thinking skills and perception. They suggest, in their structure and in the movement of their characters, ways of looking at difficulties that can help solve problems. The story of this young fox can inspire children to face challenges, to overcome and, sometimes, to make use of obstacles in their path.

These Teaching-Stories can be experienced on many levels. A child may simply enjoy hearing them, an adult may analyze them in a more sophisticated way. Both may eventually benefit from the lessons within.

Lynn Neary
"All Things Considered,"
NPR News, Washington.



Printed in Hong Kong

Idries Shah / Mallam

THE MAN AND THE FOX



THE MAN AND THE FOX

By IDRIES SHAH

Illustrated by Sally Mallam



To Alex and Marco, the two clever foxes next door,
and to jkandsr with thanks - SM

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Summary: Relates how a clever fox outwits the man who set a trap for him by promising him a chicken.
ISBN 1-883536-43-X (alk. paper)
[1. Folklore. 2. Foxes--Folklore.] I. Title.

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THE MAN AND THE FOX

by
Idries Shah



HOPOE BOOKS
BOSTON



ONCE UPON A TIME, when
the moon grew on a tree and ants were fond of
pickles, there was a lovely brown fox.



He had soft fur,
beautiful whiskers,



and a fine,
bushy tail.





This fox, whose name was Rowba, was sitting beside a road one day, combing his whiskers with his claws, when a man came along.

"May you never be tired!" said the man.


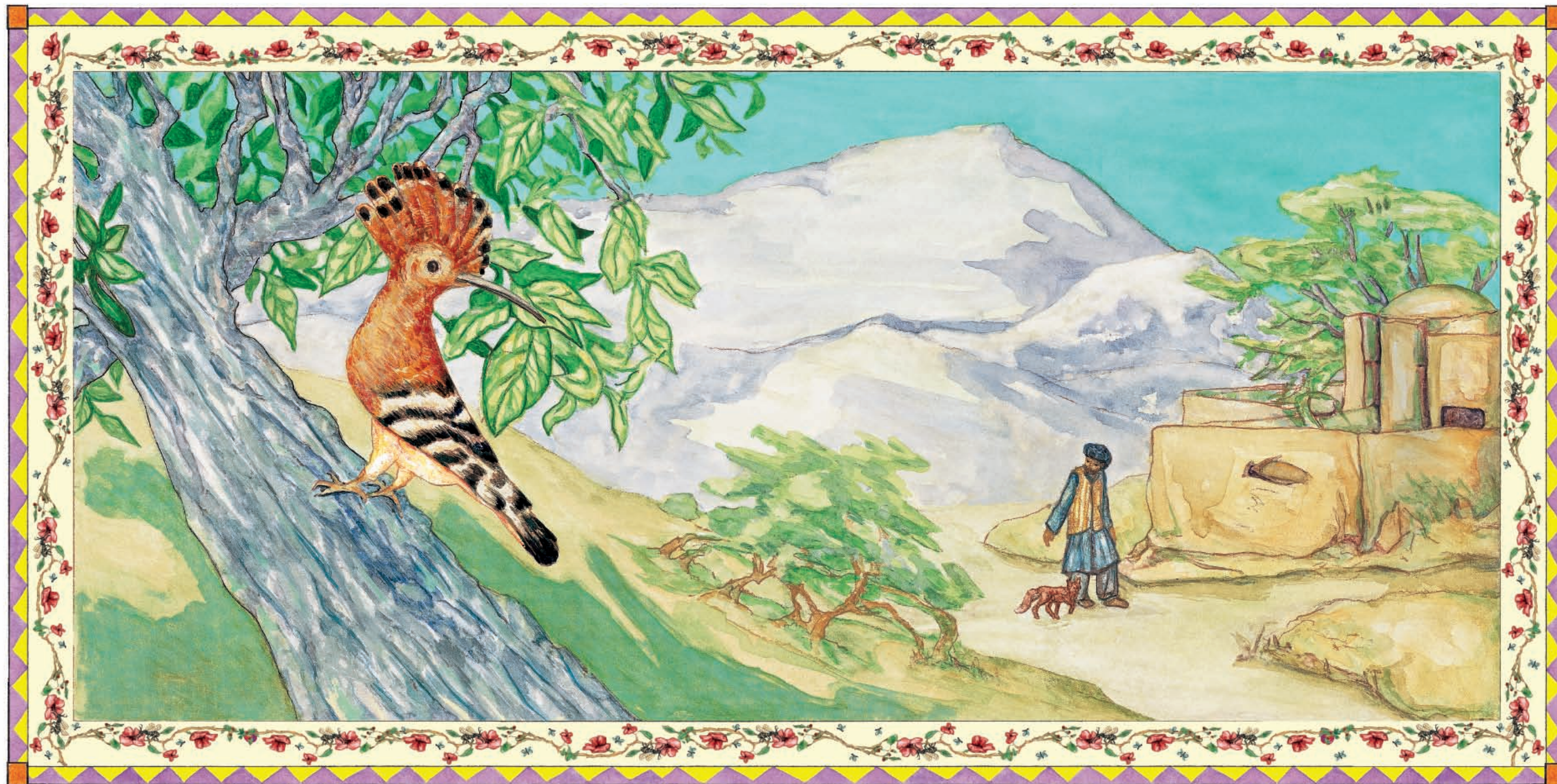
"May you always be happy!" replied Rowba.



"I'm feeling generous today," said the man.
"Is there anything you would like?"

"I would like a chicken," said Rowba, because foxes love to eat chickens.






"Come along with me, then, and I'll give you one!" replied the man. "I have chickens at my house. We'll go there, and you'll have your chicken in no time at all."

"How marvelous!" said Rowba.

And he trotted down the road beside the man.

When they got to the man's house, the man said, "Wait outside. I'll go to the yard in the back and get you one of my birds."

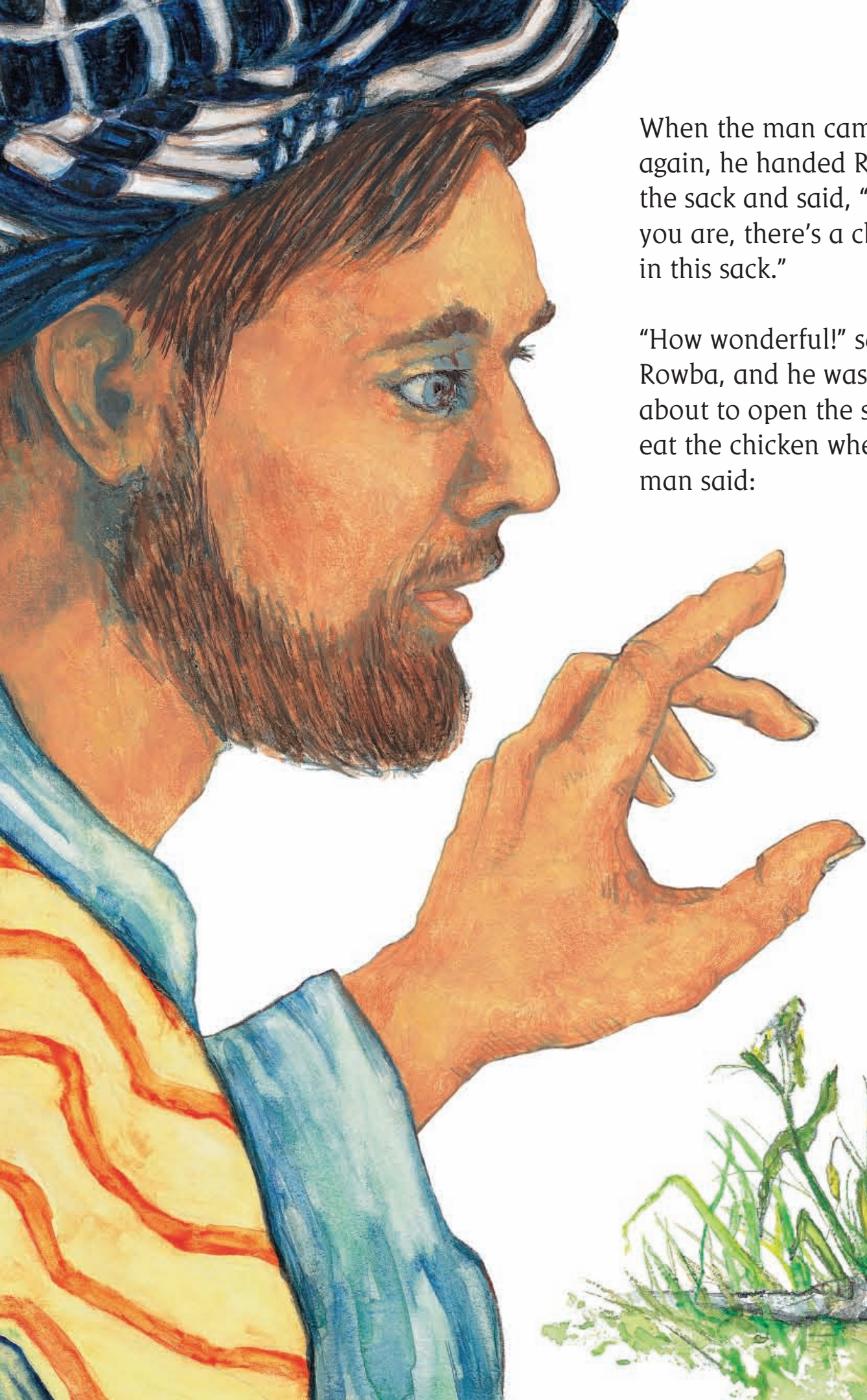


So Rowba sat down to wait and
the man went into his house.



Then the man took a sack and put some stones into it. You see, he was going to pretend there was a chicken in the sack. He wasn't really going to give a chicken to the fox at all!





When the man came out again, he handed Rowba the sack and said, "Here you are, there's a chicken in this sack."

"How wonderful!" said Rowba, and he was just about to open the sack to eat the chicken when the man said:

"No! Don't open it here!"

"Why not?" asked Rowba.

"Well," said the man, "the farmers around here can see us, and they won't like my giving a chicken to a fox."

Of course, that wasn't true at all. The man just didn't want the fox to see that there were only stones in the sack.





"What shall I do, then?" asked Rowba.

"Do you see those bushes up there?" asked the man, pointing. "Take the sack there and open it. Nobody will see you, and you can eat your chicken in peace."

"That's a good idea," said Rowba. "Thank you very much!"

And he trotted all the way to the bushes carrying the sack in his mouth.



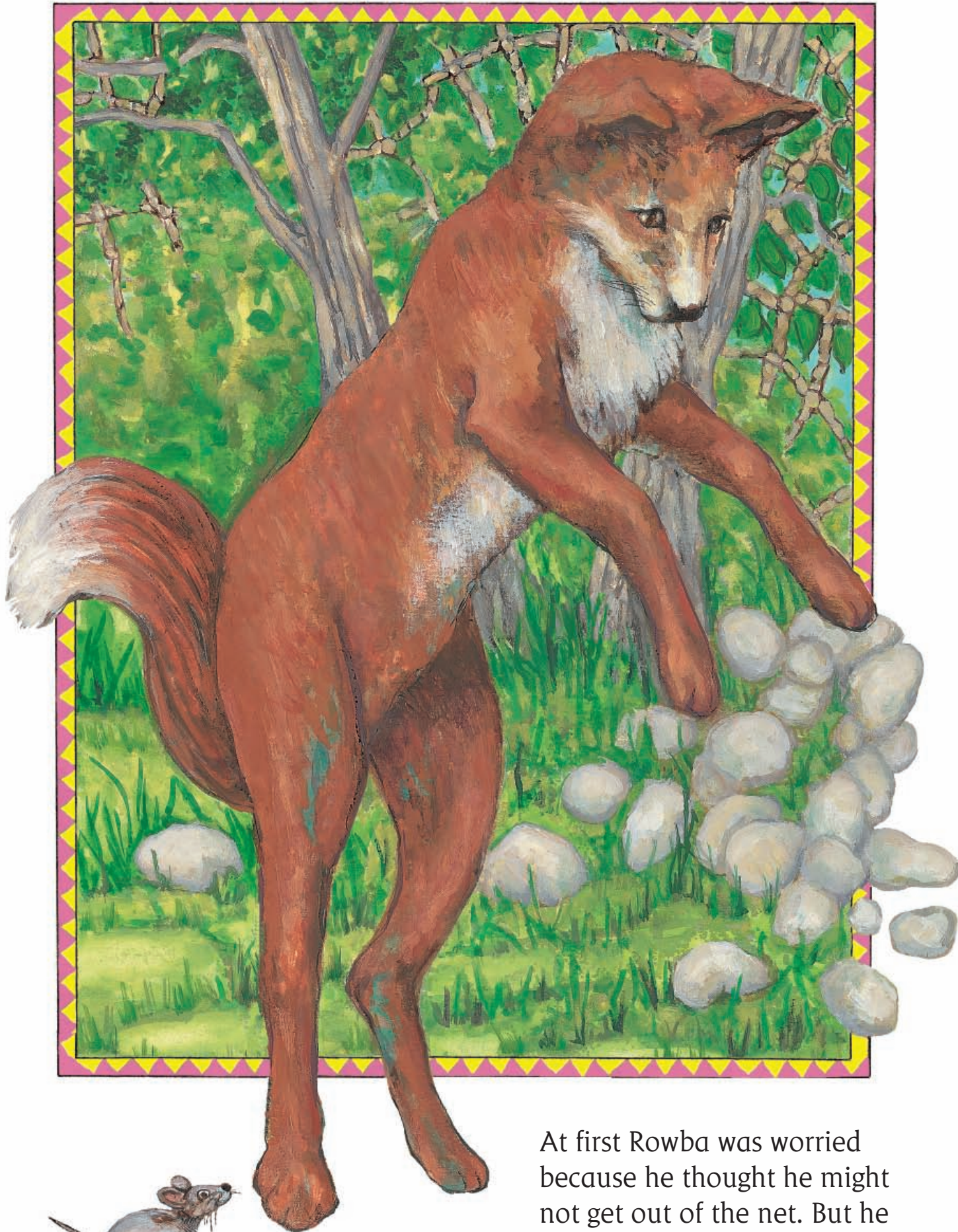
As soon as Rowba crawled under the bushes,
he opened the sack and saw the stones inside.

"Strange!" he muttered to himself.
"What kind of a funny joke is this?"



When he peeked out of the bushes, he saw
that a net had fallen over him. It was a trap!
Some hunters had put a net there to catch
any fox that went into the bushes to hide.





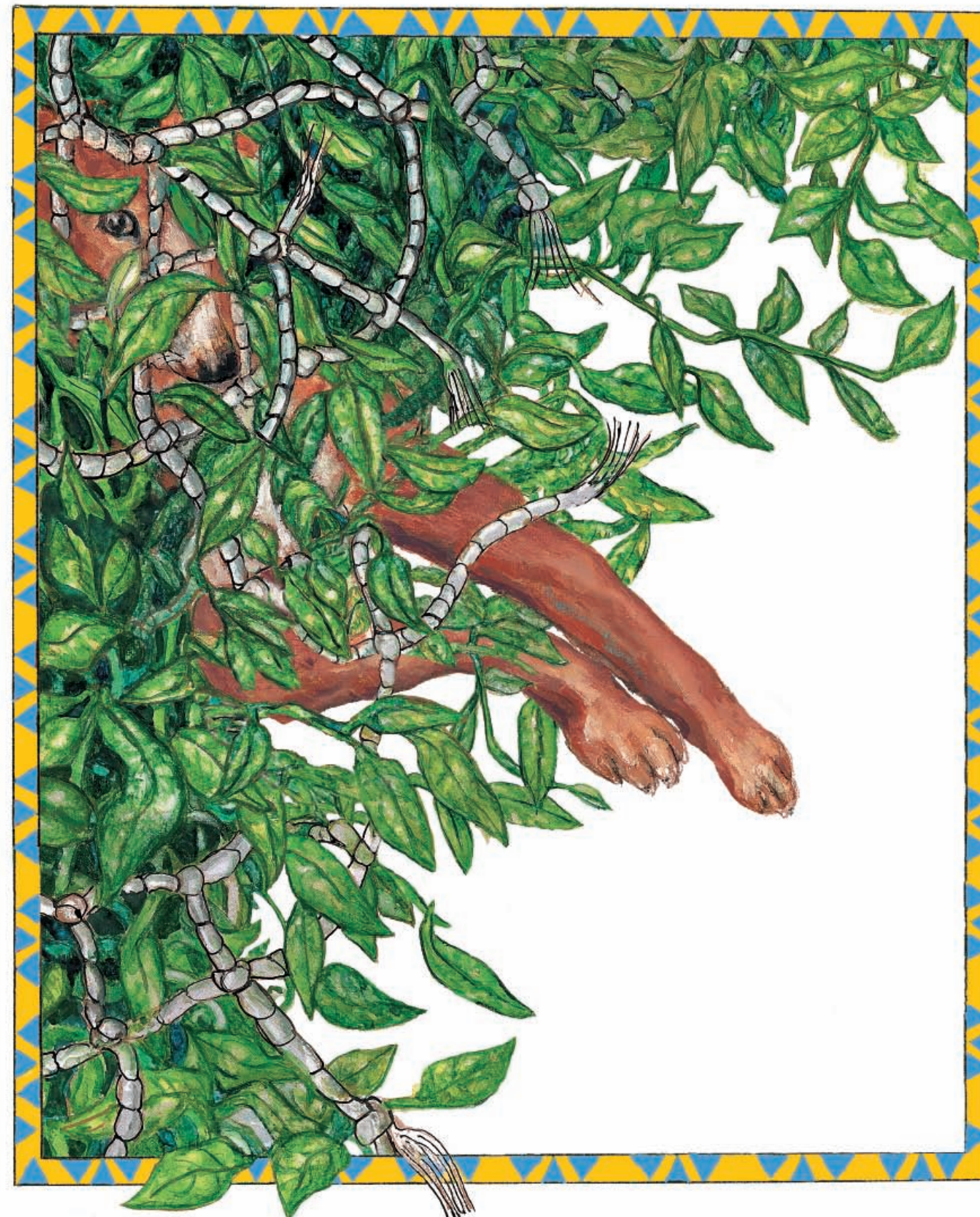
At first Rowba was worried because he thought he might not get out of the net. But he was very clever.



Foxes are very, very clever, you know. He searched through the stones in the sack and found one with a sharp edge. With this, he began to cut the net.



He cut a hole big enough for his left front paw to fit through.



He cut some more, and soon the hole was big enough for his left and his right front paws to fit through.






He cut still more, and soon the hole was big enough for his two front paws and his nose to fit through.



He kept on cutting, and soon the hole was big enough for his front paws, his nose and the rest of his head to fit through.



A vibrant illustration of a red fox with a bushy tail running through a grassy field. A grey rabbit is perched on a tree branch to the left, looking at the fox. Another rabbit is visible in the background. The scene is set against a backdrop of rolling hills and snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky. The fox is running towards the right, with its body angled slightly away from the viewer. The rabbit on the tree is looking intently at the fox. The ground is covered in green grass and small yellow flowers. The mountains in the background are layered, with the closest ones in shades of blue and the furthest ones in white. The sky is a solid, bright blue.

Then he pushed and wiggled
just a bit more. And finally ...

Rowba escaped!



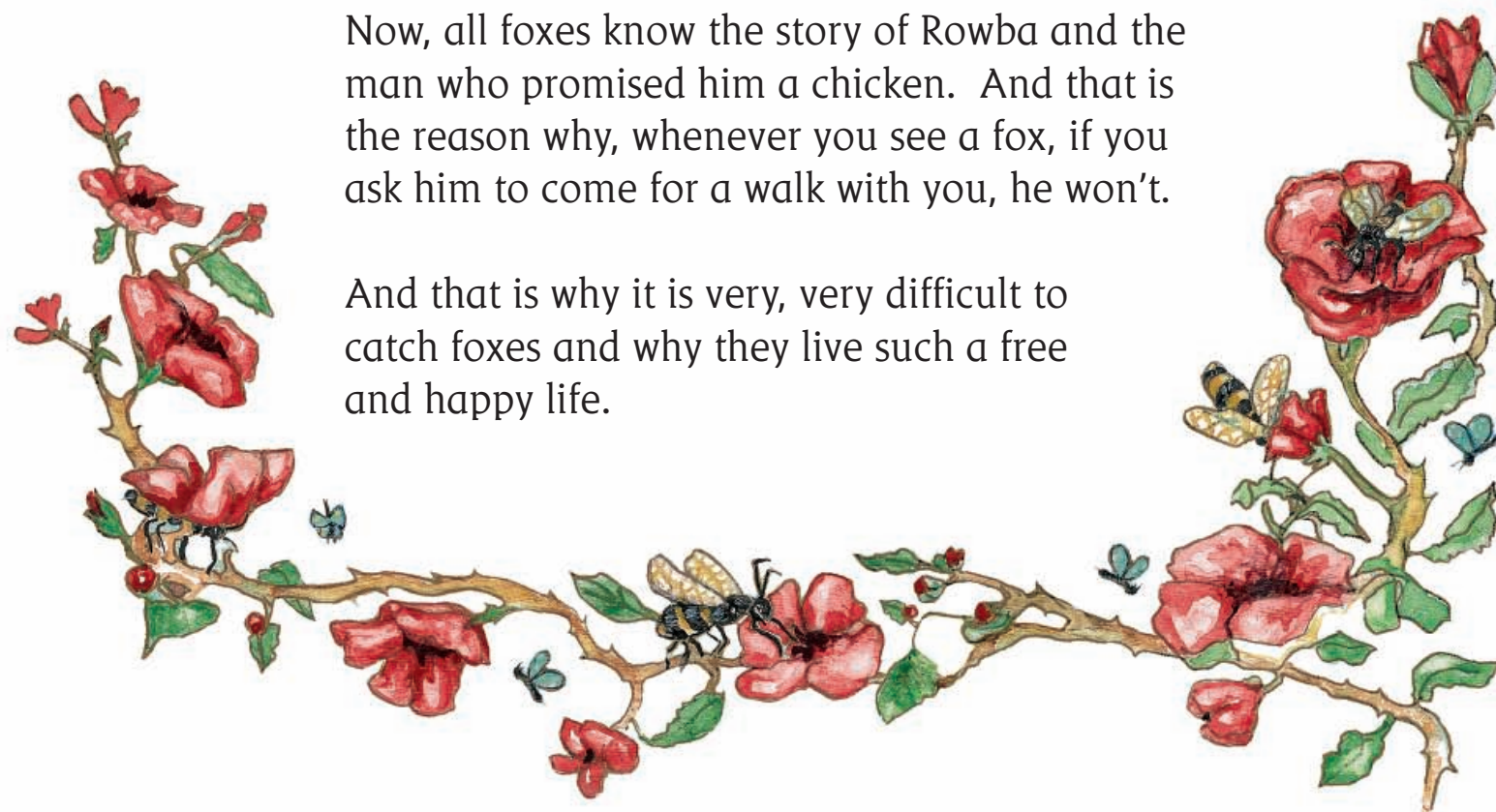
As Rowba ran off down the road, he
laughed and laughed and laughed.

“Men may think they are clever,” he said
to himself, “but foxes are cleverer still!”



Now, all foxes know the story of Rowba and the man who promised him a chicken. And that is the reason why, whenever you see a fox, if you ask him to come for a walk with you, he won't.

And that is why it is very, very difficult to catch foxes and why they live such a free and happy life.



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 The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
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 Fatima The Spinner and the Tent
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 The Magic Horse
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Studies of the English

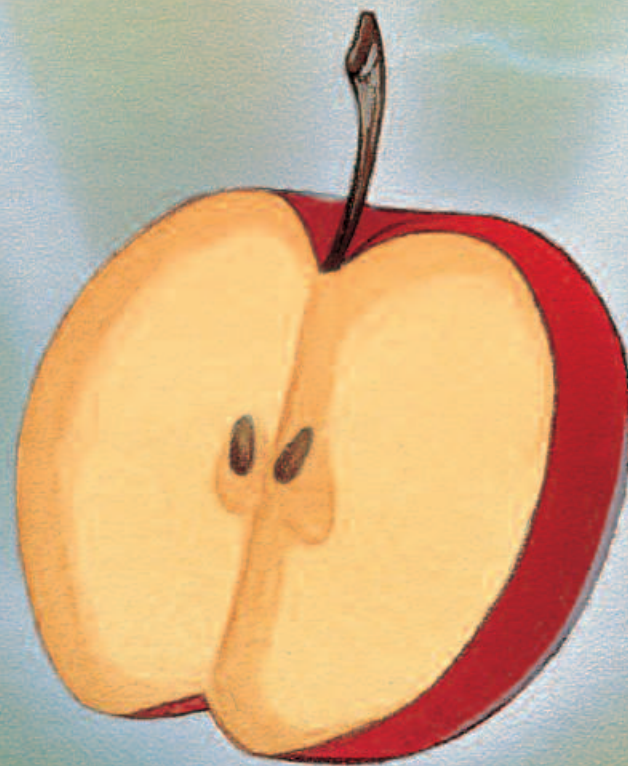
Darkest England
 The Natives are Restless
 The Englishman's Handbook



Because she fails to follow the precise instructions given to her by Arif the Wise Man, the Queen of Hich-Hich gives birth to a half-boy. How this happens and how Neem, the half-boy, becomes whole is a story that has been told and retold, by campfire and candlelight, to children all over the Middle East for more than a thousand years.

For over 30 years, Idries Shah's collections of narratives and teaching stories from the Sufi tradition have captivated the hearts and minds of people from all walks of life. This is the first in a series of books for the young.

Midori Mori and Robert Revels both live and work in San Francisco. They are graduates of the Academy of Art College in San Francisco.



ISBN 1-883536-10-3



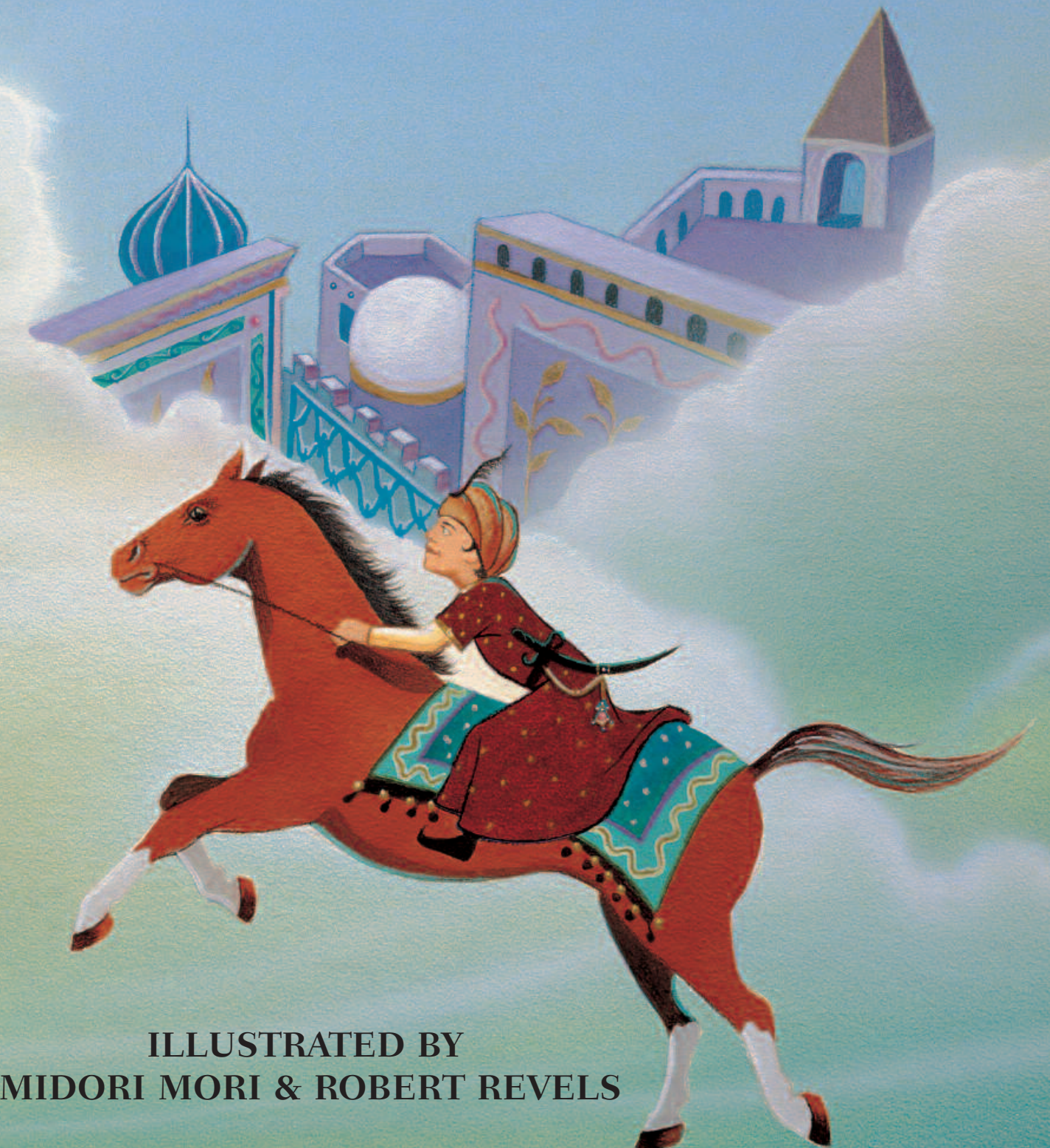
IDRIES SHAH / MORI & REVELS

NEEM THE HALF-BOY



NEEM THE HALF-BOY

BY IDRIES SHAH



ILLUSTRATED BY
MIDORI MORI & ROBERT REVELS



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Summary: Because she does not faithfully follow the instructions of Arif the Wise Man, the Queen of Hich-Hich gives birth to a half-boy, who grows up to be very clever and confronts a dragon in an effort to become whole.

ISBN 1-883536-10-3 (hard)

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NEEM THE HALF-BOY

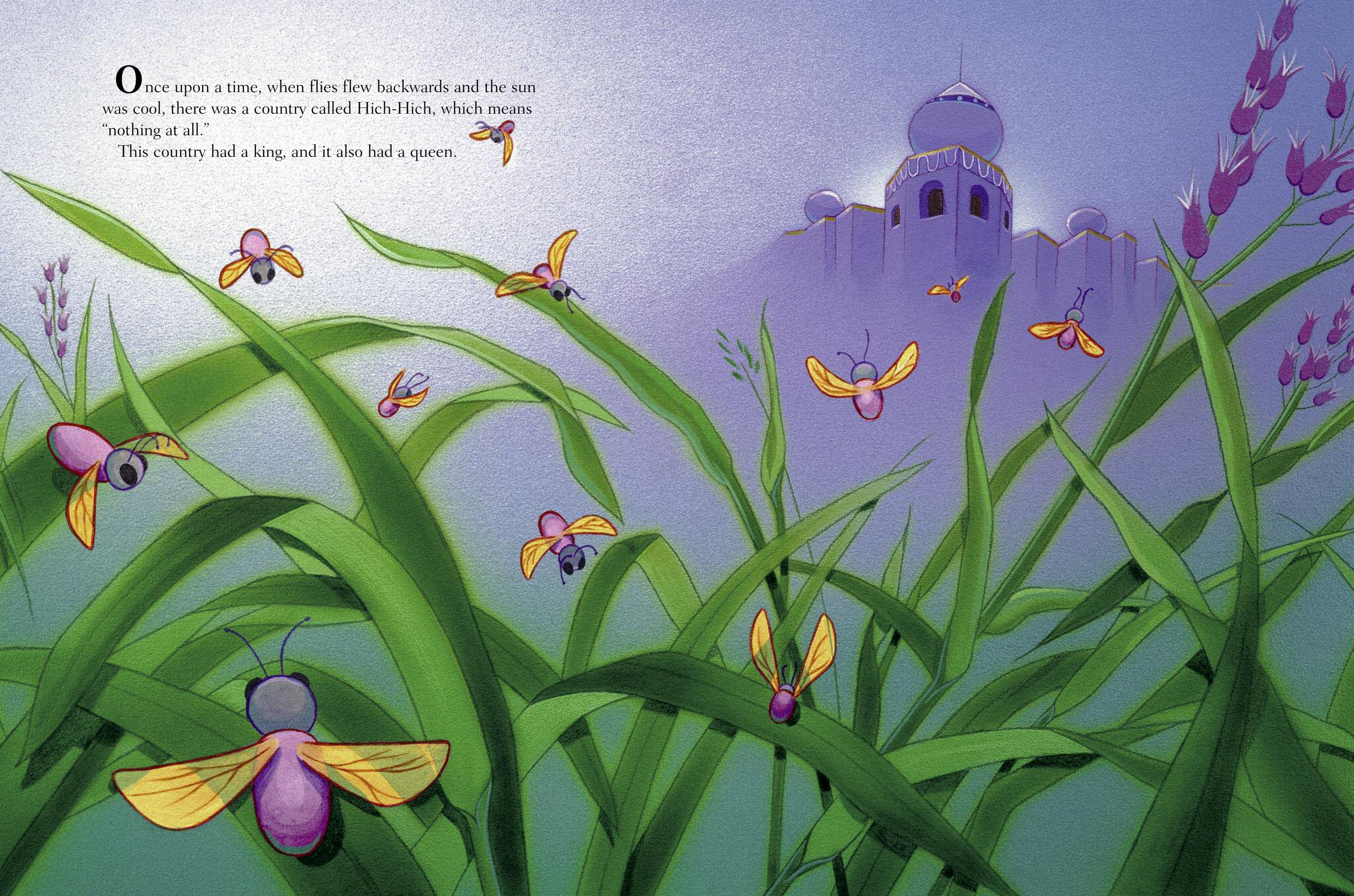
BY IDRIES SHAH



HOPOE BOOKS
BOSTON

Once upon a time, when flies flew backwards and the sun was cool, there was a country called Hich-Hich, which means “nothing at all.”

This country had a king, and it also had a queen.





Now the queen wanted to have a little boy
for a son because she didn't have one.

"How can I get a little boy?" she asked the
king.

"I don't know, I'm sure," the king replied.

So the queen asked all the people, and they said,
"We are very sorry, but we can't tell Your Majesty how to
get a little boy."

(They called her "Your Majesty" because you always call
queens — and kings too — Your Majesty.)





So the queen asked the fairies, and they said,
“We could go and ask Arif the Wise Man.”

The wise man was a very clever man, and he knew everything.

So the fairies went to the place where Arif the Wise Man lived,
and they said to him,

“We are the fairies from the country of Hich-Hich. That country
has a queen, and she wants a little boy, but she doesn’t know how to
get one.”

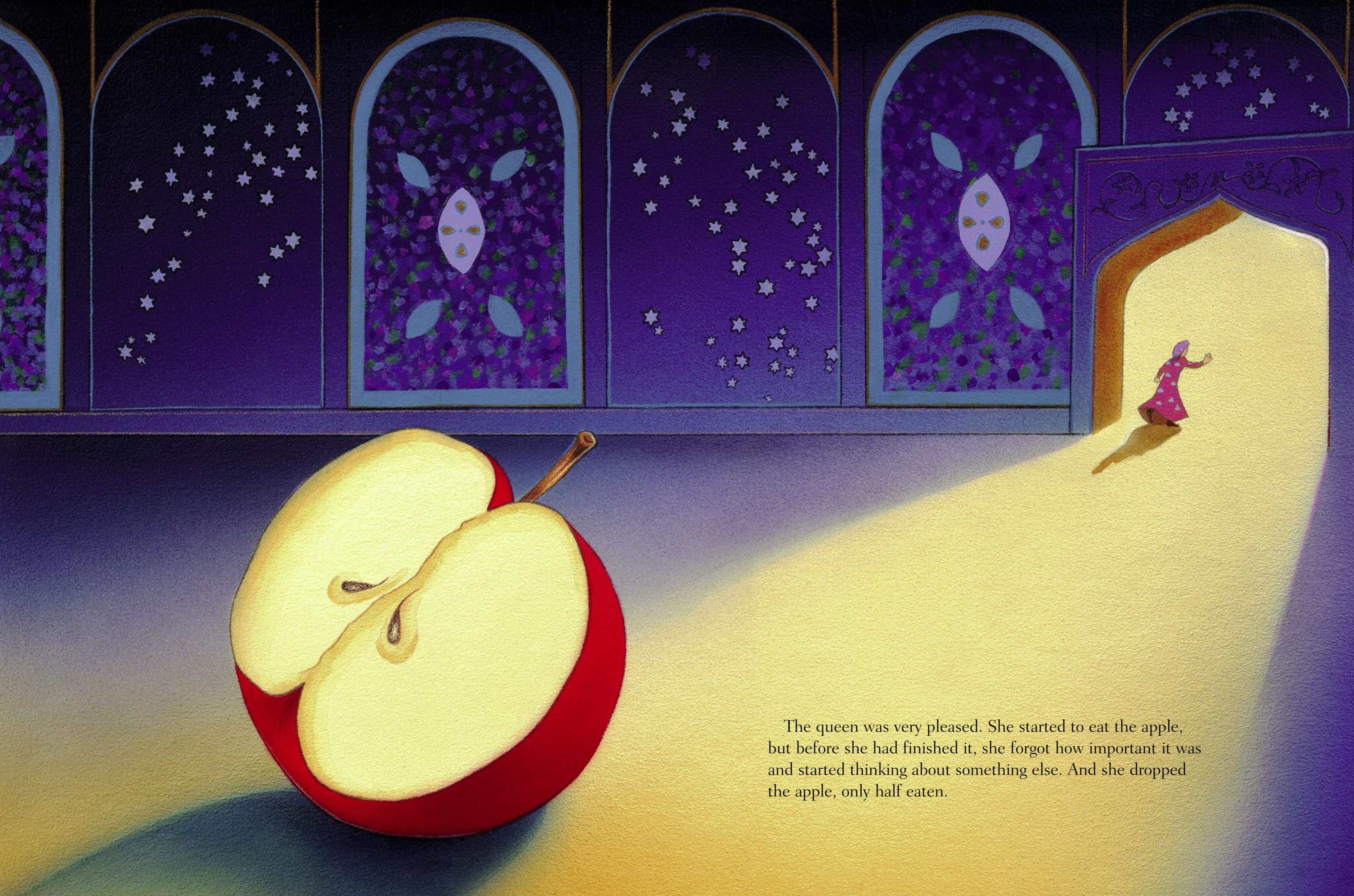
“I’ll tell you how the queen can have a little boy for a son,” said Arif
the Wise Man, with a smile.

And he picked up an apple,
and he gave it to the fairies, saying,
“Give this apple to the queen
and tell her to eat it. If she eats it,
she will have a little boy.”

So the fairies took the apple and
flew back to the queen.

“Your Majesty, we have been to
see the wise man, Arif, who knows
everything,” they told her, “and he
says that you should eat this apple.
If you eat it, you will have a little
boy for a son.”



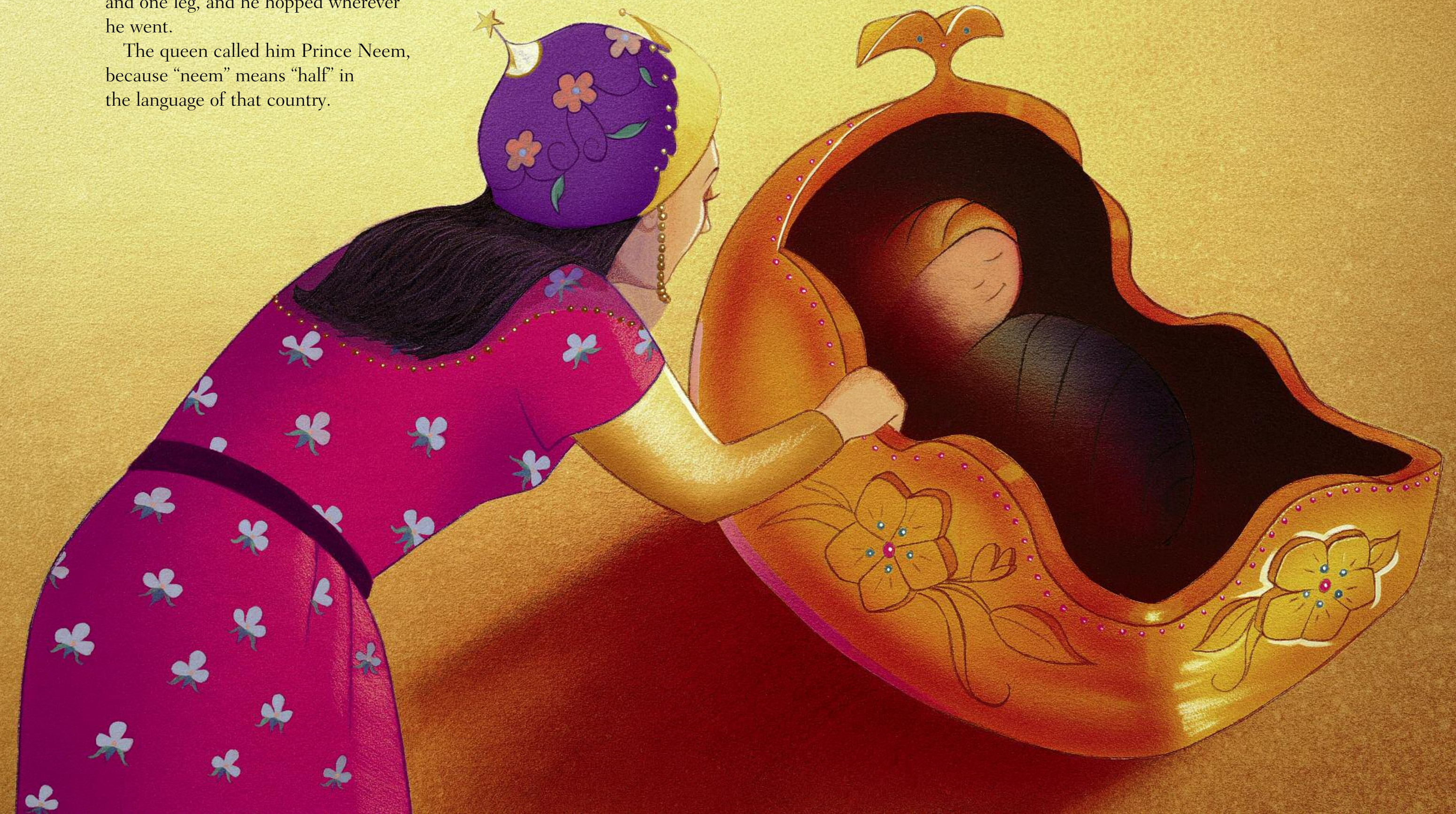


The queen was very pleased. She started to eat the apple, but before she had finished it, she forgot how important it was and started thinking about something else. And she dropped the apple, only half eaten.

And she did have a little boy.
But, because she had eaten only half of
the apple, the boy she had was a half-boy.

He had one eye and one ear, one arm
and one leg, and he hopped wherever
he went.

The queen called him Prince Neem,
because “neem” means “half” in
the language of that country.



As he grew bigger, Prince Neem went everywhere on a horse. As a half-boy, he could get around better on a horse, because he didn't have to hop.

He became very clever at riding his horse, and he grew to be a very clever little boy in every way.

But he got bored with being a half-boy, and he used to say, "I would like to be a whole boy. How can I become a whole boy?"

And the queen would answer, "I'm sure I don't know."

And the king would say, "I have no idea at all."



And the fairies, when they came to hear about it, said,
“Perhaps we should go and ask the wise man, who knows every-
thing, how Prince Neem can become a whole boy.”

So the fairies flew through the air to the place where Arif the Wise
Man lived, and they said to him,

“We are the fairies who came to see you about the Queen of Hich-
Hich who wanted a little boy, but he is only a half-boy, and he wants
to be a whole boy. Can you help him?”



medicine in Taneen's cave. If he drinks it, he will become a whole boy. Go and tell him that," said Arif the Wise Man.

So the fairies flew into the air, and they didn't stop flying until they came to the palace where the king and the queen and Neem, the half-boy, lived.

And Arif the Wise Man sighed and said, "The queen ate only half the apple. That is why she had only a half-boy. But, since that was so long ago, she cannot eat the other half. It must have gone bad by now."

"Well, is there anything that Neem, the half-boy, can do to become a whole boy?" asked the fairies.

"Tell Neem, the half-boy, that he can go to see Taneen, the fire-breathing dragon. He lives in a cave and is annoying everyone around by blowing fire all over them. The half-boy will find a special, wonderful



When they got there, they found Prince Neem and said to him,
“We have been to see Arif the Wise Man, who is very clever and
knows everything. He told us to tell you that you must drive out Taneen
the Dragon, who is annoying the people. In the back of his cave you will
find the special, wonderful medicine which will make you into a whole

Prince Neem thanked the fairies, got on his horse, and trotted it to the cave where Taneen the Dragon was sitting, breathing fire all over the place.

“Now I am going to drive you out, Dragon!” cried Prince Neem to Taneen.

“But why should you?” asked Taneen.

And Prince Neem said, “I am going to drive you away because you keep breathing fire all over people and they don’t like it.”



"I must breathe fire because I have to cook my food. If I had a stove to do my cooking on, I wouldn't have to do it," replied Taneen sadly.

"I could give you a stove to do your cooking on. But I must still drive you out," said the prince, and the dragon replied,

"Why should you, if I stopped breathing fire over people?"

"I would have to get you to go because you have got a special, wonderful medicine in the back of your cave. If I drink it I can become a whole boy, and I want to be a whole boy very much," said Neem.

"But I could give you the medicine, so that you would not have to drive me away to get it. You could drink it, and you would become a whole boy. Then you could go and get me a stove, and I would be able to do my cooking, and I wouldn't have to blow fire all over people!" said the dragon.



So Neem waited while the dragon went into the back of his cave. Presently Taneen came back with a bottle of the special, wonderful medicine.

Prince Neem drank it all down,



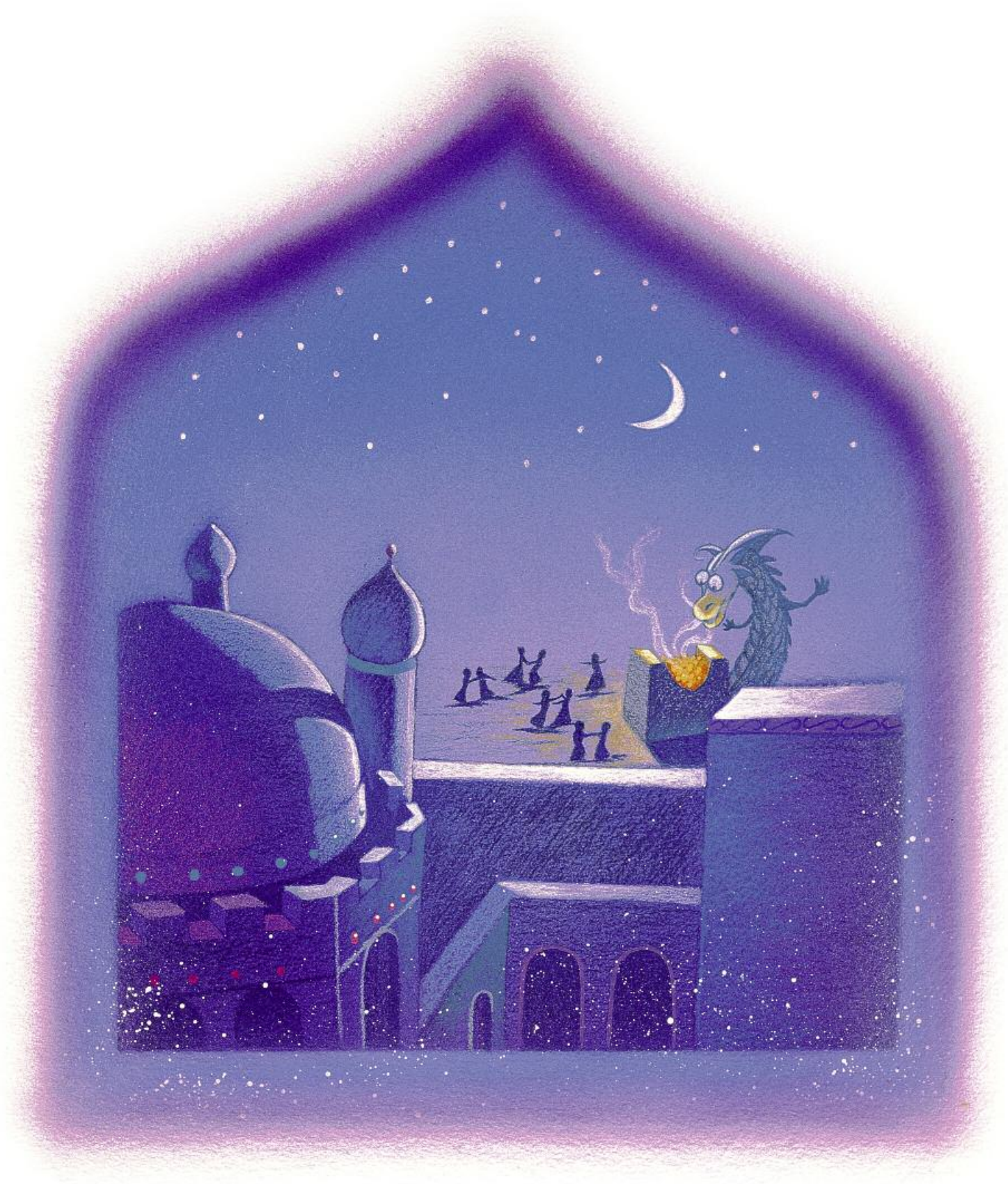
and in less time than it takes to tell, he grew another arm, another side, another leg, another ear and everything.

He had become a whole boy!
And he was very, very pleased.



He got on his horse and rode quickly back to the palace at Hich-Hich. There he fetched a cooking-stove and took it back to Taneen.

And after that Taneen the Dragon lived quietly in his cave, and never blew fire over anyone again, and all the people were very happy.



From then on, Neem, the half-boy, was called Kull, which means “the whole-boy” in the language of Hich-Hich.

It would have been silly of him to be called a half-boy when he was a whole one, wouldn’t it?

And everyone lived happily for evermore.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

Fatima the Spinner and the Tent
The Man with Bad Manners
The Man and the Fox
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Silly Chicken
The Farmer’s Wife
The Boy Without A Name
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
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World Tales

Literature

The Hundred Tales of Wisdom
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Special Illumination
The World of Nasrudin

Travel

Destination Mecca

Human Thought

Learning How to Learn
The Elephant in the Dark
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Reflections
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Seeker After Truth

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The Sufis
The Way of the Sufi
Tales of the Dervishes
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Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
The Commanding Self
Knowing How to Know





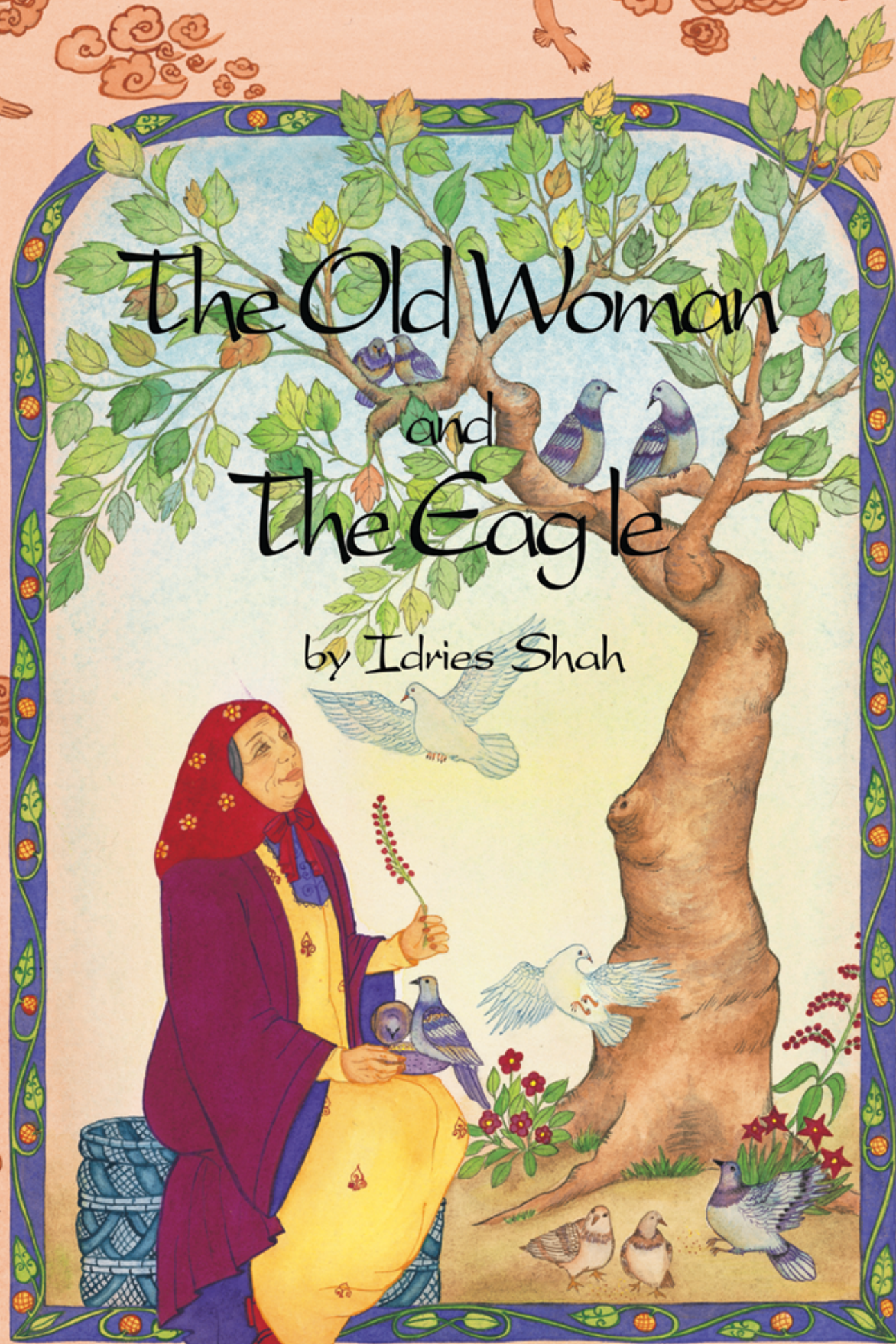
ISBN 1-883536-27-8



Printed in Hong Kong.

Idries Shah / Delmar

The Old Woman and The Eagle



The Old Woman and The Eagle

by Idries Shah

Illustrated by
Natasha Delmar

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by

Idries Shah

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The old woman and the eagle / by Idries Shah ; illustrated by Natasha Delmar.
p. cm.

Summary: A Sufi teaching tale from Afghanistan about an old woman who insists that an eagle must really be a pigeon.

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nce upon a time,
when cups were plates
and when knives and forks grew in
the ground, there was an old woman
who had never seen an eagle.

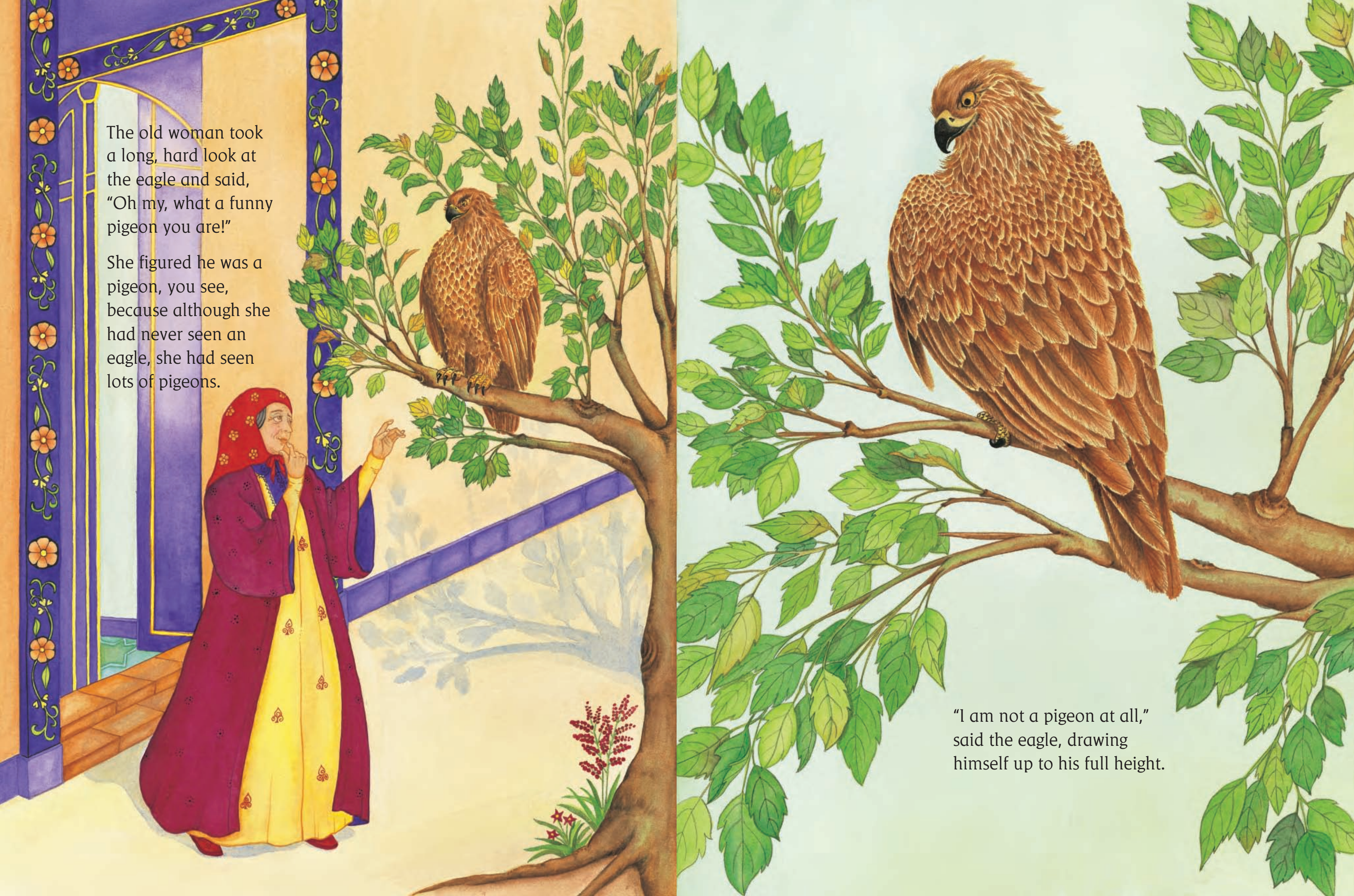


One day, an eagle was flying high in the sky and decided to stop for a rest. He swooped down and landed — where do you think?



He landed right at
the front door of the
old woman's house.





A two-page spread from a children's book. On the left page, an old woman with a red headscarf and a purple and yellow robe stands on a stone path, looking up at an eagle perched on a tree branch. The eagle is brown with a black beak. The background shows a purple wall and a blue sky. On the right page, the eagle is shown in a larger, more detailed view, perched on a tree branch. The eagle is looking down and to the left. The background is a light blue sky with green leaves on the tree branches.


The old woman took
a long, hard look at
the eagle and said,
"Oh my, what a funny
pigeon you are!"

She figured he was a
pigeon, you see,
because although she
had never seen an
eagle, she had seen
lots of pigeons.





"I am not a pigeon at all,"
said the eagle, drawing
himself up to his full height.





"Nonsense!" said the old woman. "I've lived for more years than you've got feathers in your wings, and I know a pigeon when I see one."



"If you're so sure that I'm a pigeon," said the eagle, "then why do you say I'm a funny pigeon?"







"Well, just look at your beak," said the old woman. "It's all bent. Pigeons have nice, straight beaks.

And look at those claws of yours! Pigeons don't have long claws like that.

And look at the feathers on top of your head! They are all messed up and need to be brushed down. Pigeons have nice, smooth feathers on their heads."



And before the eagle could
reply, she got hold of him and
carried him into the house.



She took her clippers and
trimmed his claws until
they were quite short.



She pulled on his beak
until it was quite straight.



And she brushed down
the lovely tuft of feathers
on top of his head until
it was quite flat.



"Now you look more like a pigeon!" said the old woman. "That's so much better!"

But the eagle didn't feel any better. In fact, he felt quite sad.



As soon as the old woman let him go he flew to the top of a tree. As he was sitting there wondering what to do, another eagle came along and alighted on the bough beside him.

"Well, well," said the new bird. "Aren't you a funny looking eagle!"

"Well, at least you know I'm an eagle," said the first eagle. "Thank goodness for that!"

"What happened to you?" asked the new eagle.



“Well,” said the first eagle, “An old woman thought I was a pigeon.

And since pigeons don’t have long claws, she trimmed my claws.

And since pigeons don’t have hooked beaks, she straightened my beak.

And since pigeons don’t have tufts of feathers on their heads, she brushed my tuft down.”



“She must be a very foolish old woman, indeed,” said the new eagle.

And with that, he took a brush from under his wing, and he brushed the first eagle’s feathers back into a tuft.

And with his claws he bent the eagle’s beak down until it was nicely rounded once again.



"There now!" he said, "you look like an eagle again. Don't worry about your claws, they'll soon grow back."

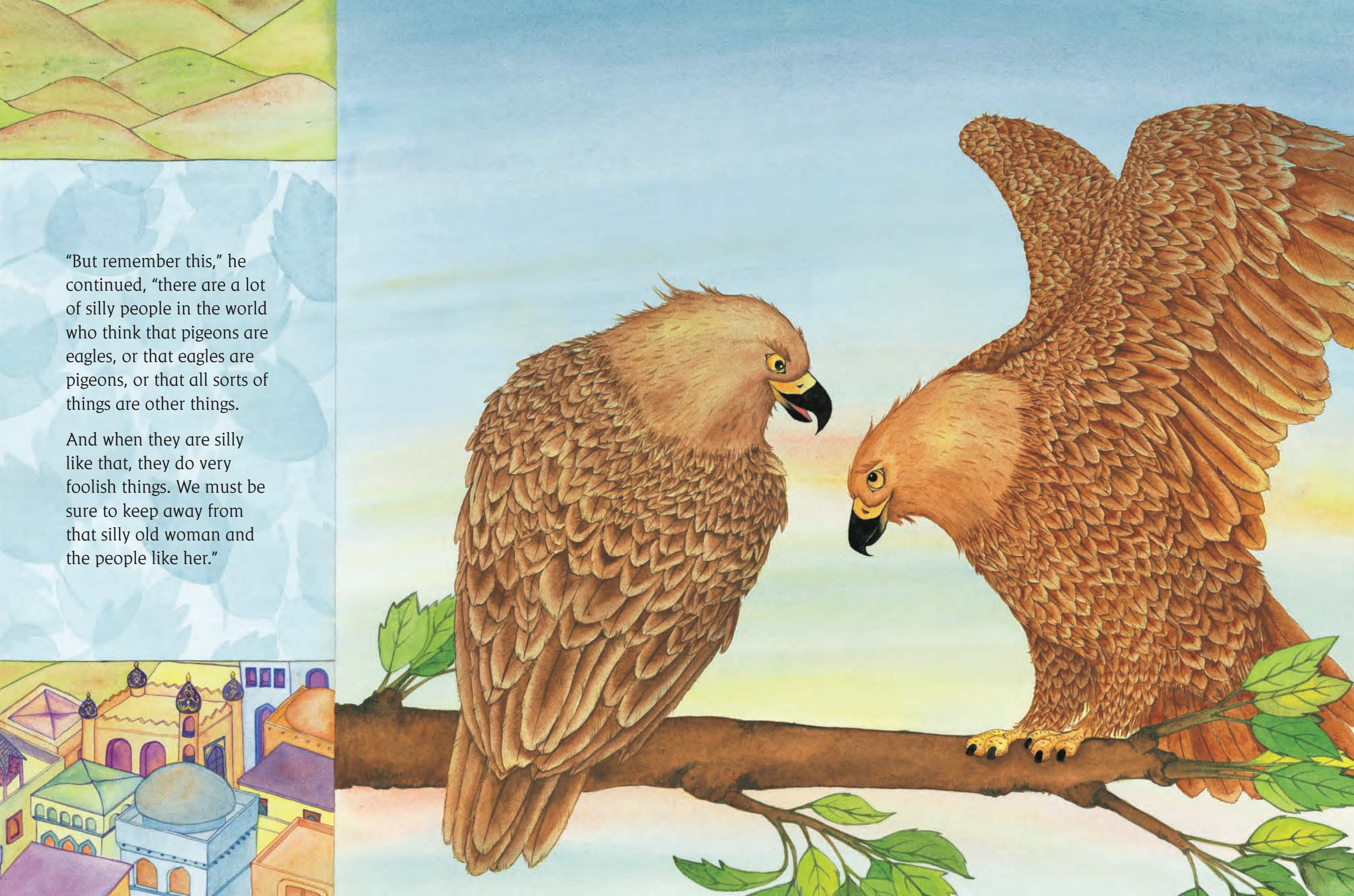
"Thank you, my friend!" said the first eagle.

"Think nothing of it," said his new friend.



"But remember this," he continued, "there are a lot of silly people in the world who think that pigeons are eagles, or that eagles are pigeons, or that all sorts of things are other things.

And when they are silly like that, they do very foolish things. We must be sure to keep away from that silly old woman and the people like her."





And with that, the eagles
flew back to their own
country and returned to
their own nests.

And they never went near
that silly old woman again.





And so everyone lived happily ever after.

Other Books by Idries Shah

For Young Readers

Neem the Half-Boy
The Farmer's Wife
The Silly Chicken
The Boy Without a Name
The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
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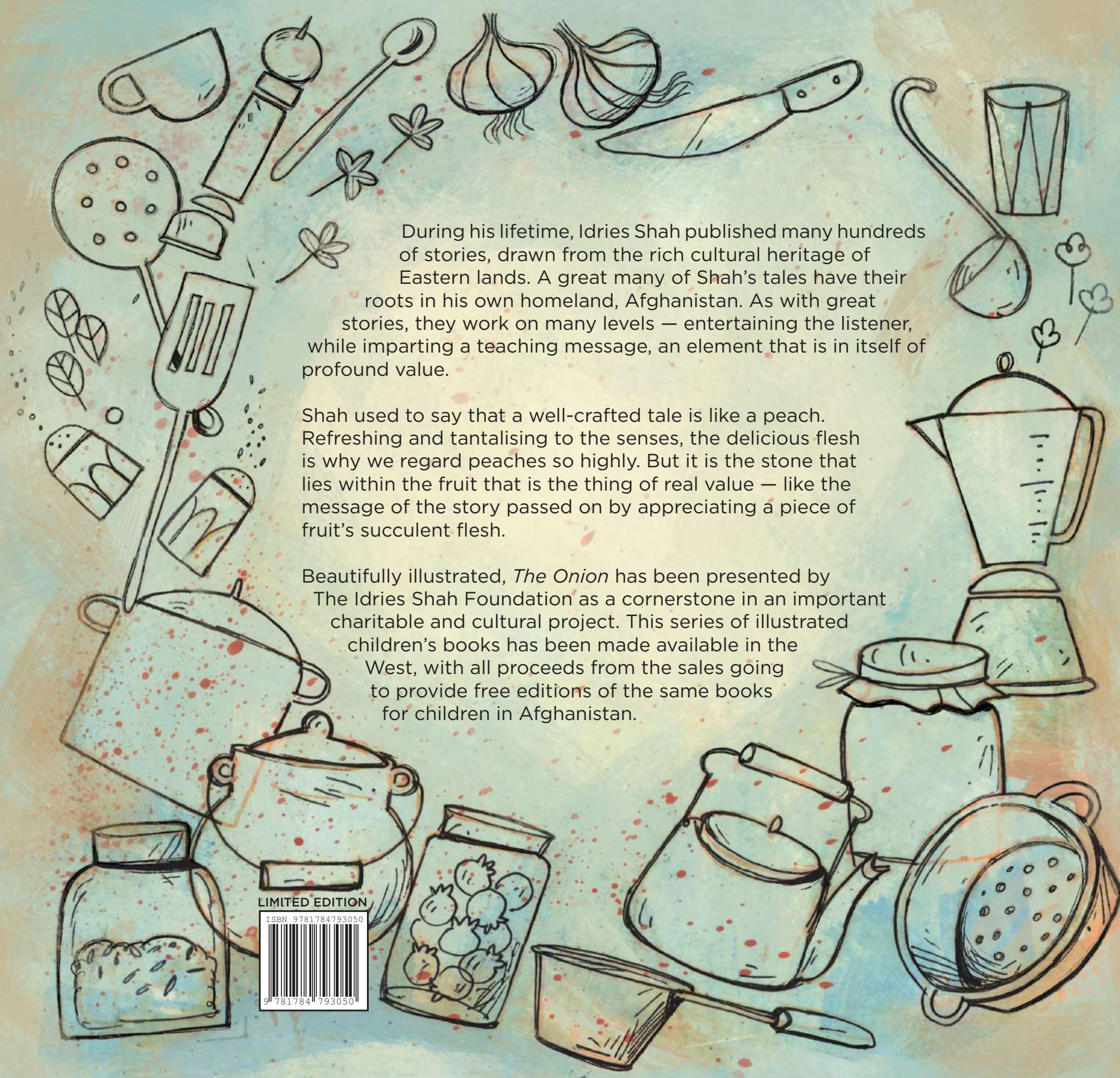
Learning How to Learn
The Elephant in the Dark
Thinkers of the East
Reflections
A Veiled Gazelle
Seeker After Truth

Sufi Studies

The Sufis
The Way of the Sufi
Tales of the Dervishes
The Book of the Book
Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study
The Commanding Self
Knowing How to Know

Studies of the English

Darkest England
The Natives are Restless



During his lifetime, Idries Shah published many hundreds of stories, drawn from the rich cultural heritage of Eastern lands. A great many of Shah's tales have their roots in his own homeland, Afghanistan. As with great stories, they work on many levels — entertaining the listener, while imparting a teaching message, an element that is in itself of profound value.

Shah used to say that a well-crafted tale is like a peach. Refreshing and tantalising to the senses, the delicious flesh is why we regard peaches so highly. But it is the stone that lies within the fruit that is the thing of real value — like the message of the story passed on by appreciating a piece of fruit's succulent flesh.

Beautifully illustrated, *The Onion* has been presented by The Idries Shah Foundation as a cornerstone in an important charitable and cultural project. This series of illustrated children's books has been made available in the West, with all proceeds from the sales going to provide free editions of the same books for children in Afghanistan.

LIMITED EDITION



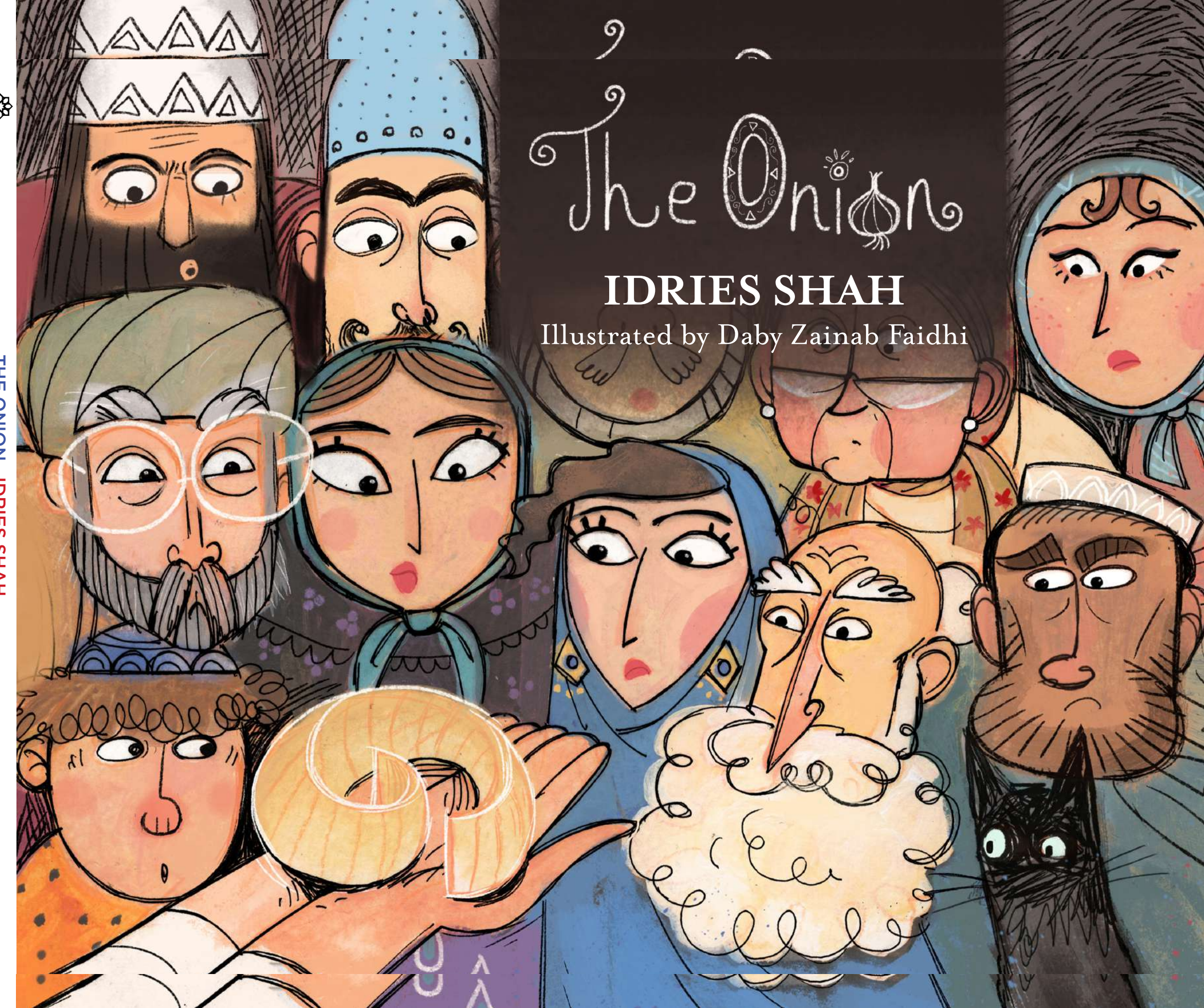
ISBN 9781784793050

THE ONION IDRIES SHAH

The Onion

IDRIES SHAH

Illustrated by Daby Zainab Faidhi



The Onion



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Layout and Design: Rachana Shah

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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



The Onion
BY IDRIES SHAH

CHILDREN’S BOOKS BY IDRIES SHAH

- Speak First and Lose
- The Ants and the Pen
- The Tale of the Sands
- After a Swim
- The Man, the Tree and the Wolf
- The Horrible Dib Dib
- The Fisherman’s Neighbour
- The Magic Potion of Oinkink
- The Rich Man and the Monkey
- The Boy With No Voice and the Men Who Couldn’t Hear
- The Tale of Melon City

Dedicated to the sense of imagination which lives within us all.

There was once a time and a town in which onions were rare, almost unknown.



Then one day, a traveller dropped a large onion in the town's main square.



The citizens, or many of them, were very interested in this curious new object.



They could see that it was some kind of vegetable.
But they wanted to know more.



By chance, the first person to venture near the onion coughed, as he approached.



He immediately ran away to teach that 'onions cause coughs'.



The second person to inch near the onion found that it had a strong smell.



'If the outside is as strong as this, then the inside must be almost impossible to bear,' he wept.





So he left the onion alone.

The third man to come close was braver, making a cut in the onion.





A layer of it came off in his hand.

‘What a miraculous object!’ he cried to the crowd.

‘This object has magical qualities. You cut it and it discards the whole of its outside, leaving an inside which is just the same!’



The next person who was brave enough to handle the onion stripped off its outer layer.





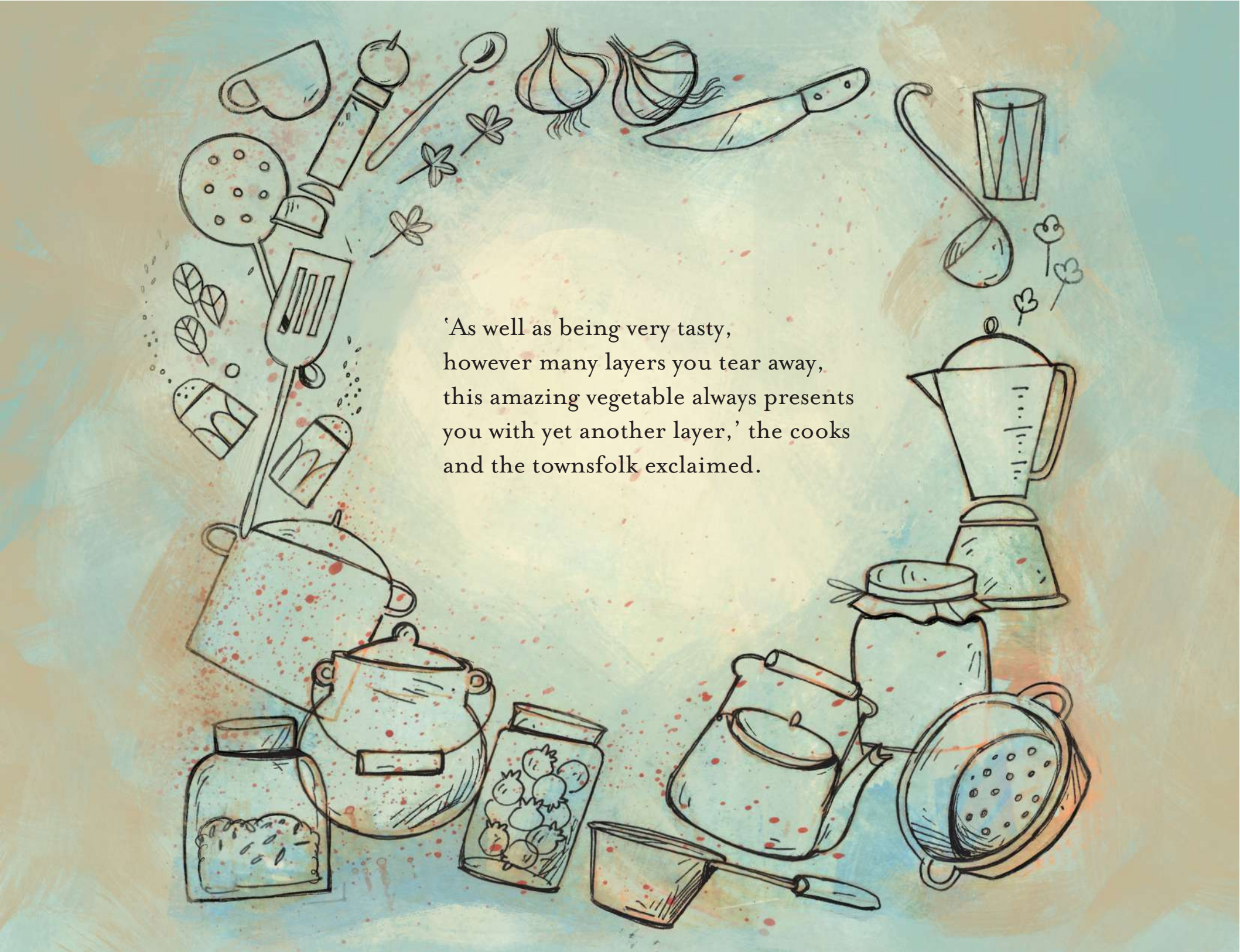
And tried cooking some of it.



She realised that cooked onion was delicious, when treated correctly.



In fact, cooked onion was so delicious that she made quite a name for herself, teaching others to recreate the dish.



'As well as being very tasty, however many layers you tear away, this amazing vegetable always presents you with yet another layer,' the cooks and the townsfolk exclaimed.

'It seems to be getting smaller.'
Someone remarked.





'Nonsense!' cried the cooks and the townsfolk.
'That's just an optical illusion.'

You see, they all wanted to believe that the onion was everlasting.



And when the last layer had been ripped from the onion ...



... everyone exclaimed:
'It is undoubtedly a magical but yet a treacherous thing.'

And wiping their hands free from onion juice, they all
agreed ...



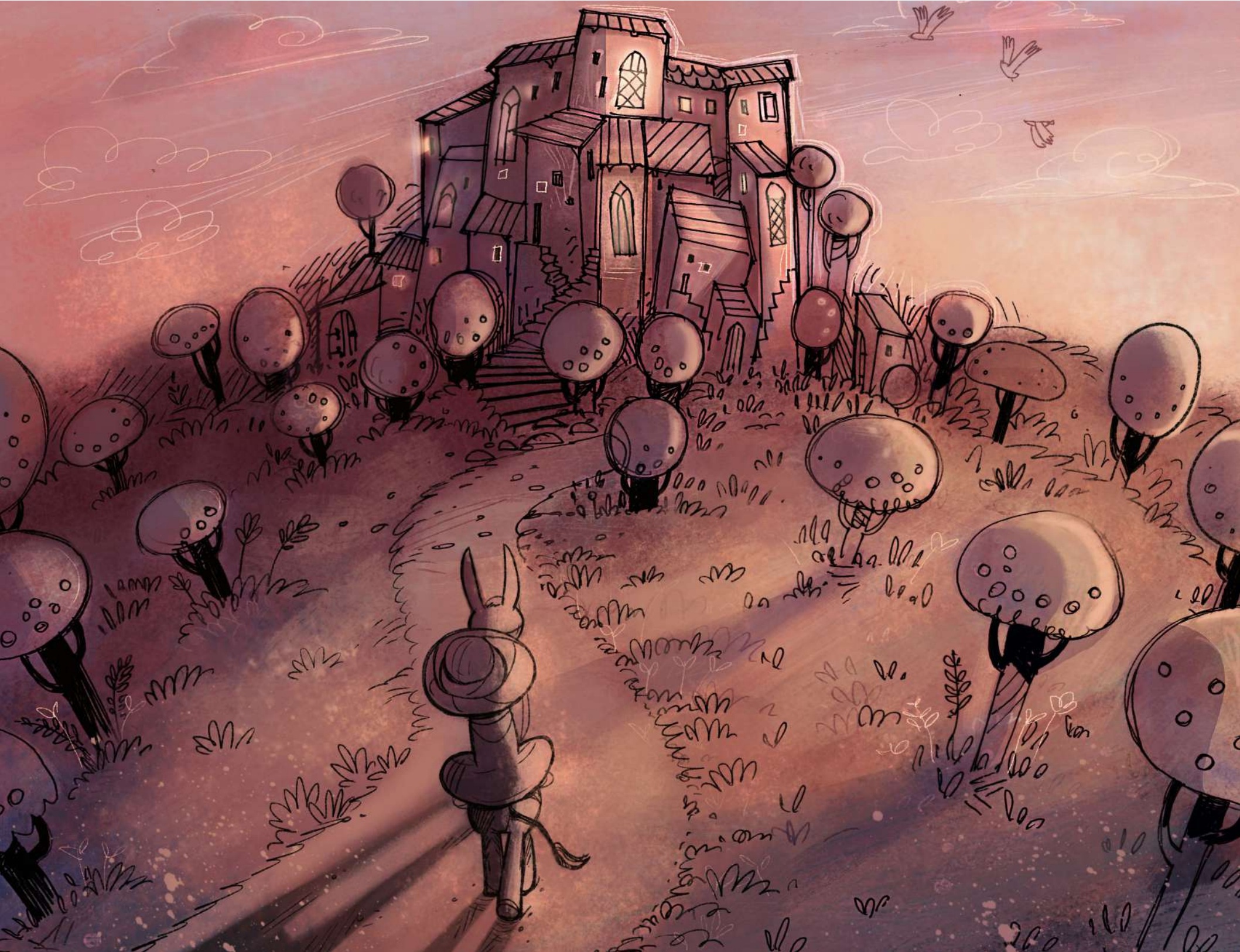
... as indeed was the most sensible thing to do ...



... that people were better off ...



... on balance ...



... in a town without any onions at all.



The End



The sixth title in this award-winning series of children's stories by Idries Shah, *The Silly Chicken* is the delightful tale of a chicken who learns to speak as we do. What follows will intrigue young children and, at the same time, alert them in a very amusing way to the dangers of being too gullible.

This tale is one of the many hundreds of Sufi developmental stories collected by Idries Shah from oral and written sources in Central Asia and the Middle East. For more than a thousand years this story has entertained young people and helped to foster in them the ability to examine their assumptions and to think for themselves.

This is illustrator/ animator Jeff Jackson's first children's book. It expresses his unique ability to create a lively and amusing world, rich in color, and one in which anything can happen. His illustrations are full of visual delights and details faithful to the part of the world from which this story comes.

ISBN 1-883536-19-7



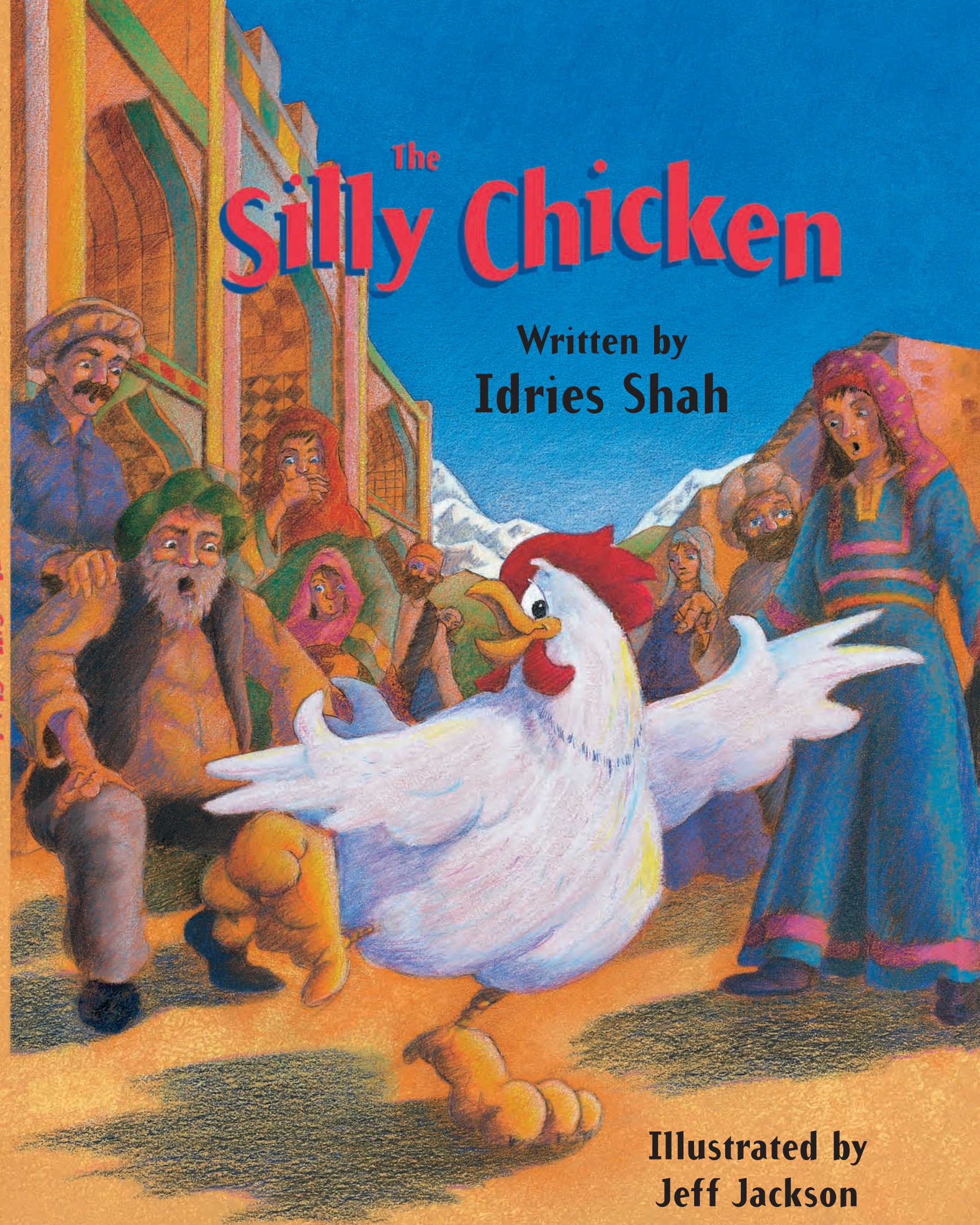
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Idries Shah · Jeff Jackson

The Silly Chicken

The Silly Chicken

Written by
Idries Shah



Illustrated by
Jeff Jackson

HOVE



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The silly chicken / written by Idries Shah ; illustrated by Jeff Jackson.— 1st ed.
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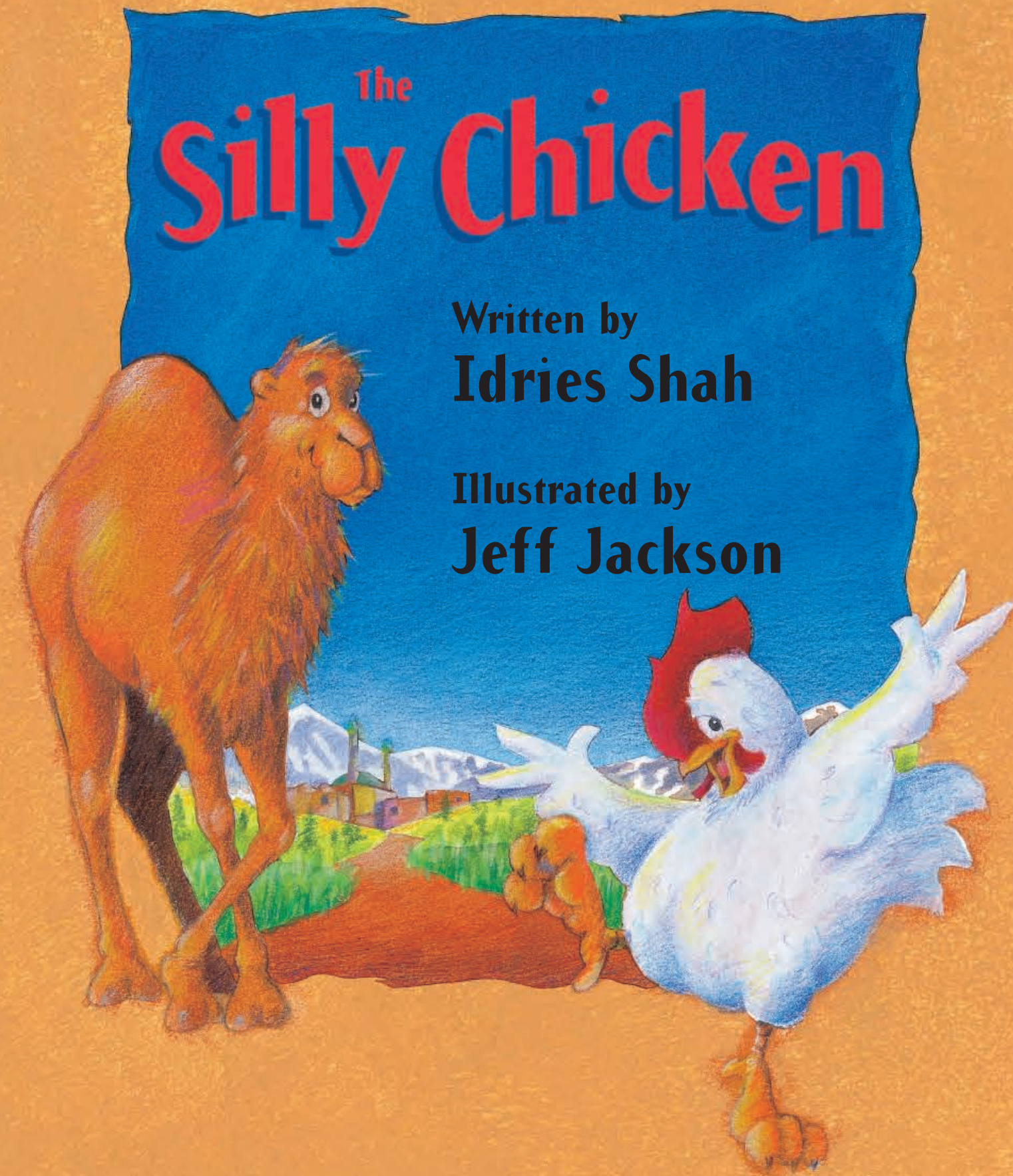
Summary: A Sufi teaching tale of a chicken that has learned to speak as people do and spreads an alarming warning, which causes the townspeople panic without first considering the messenger.

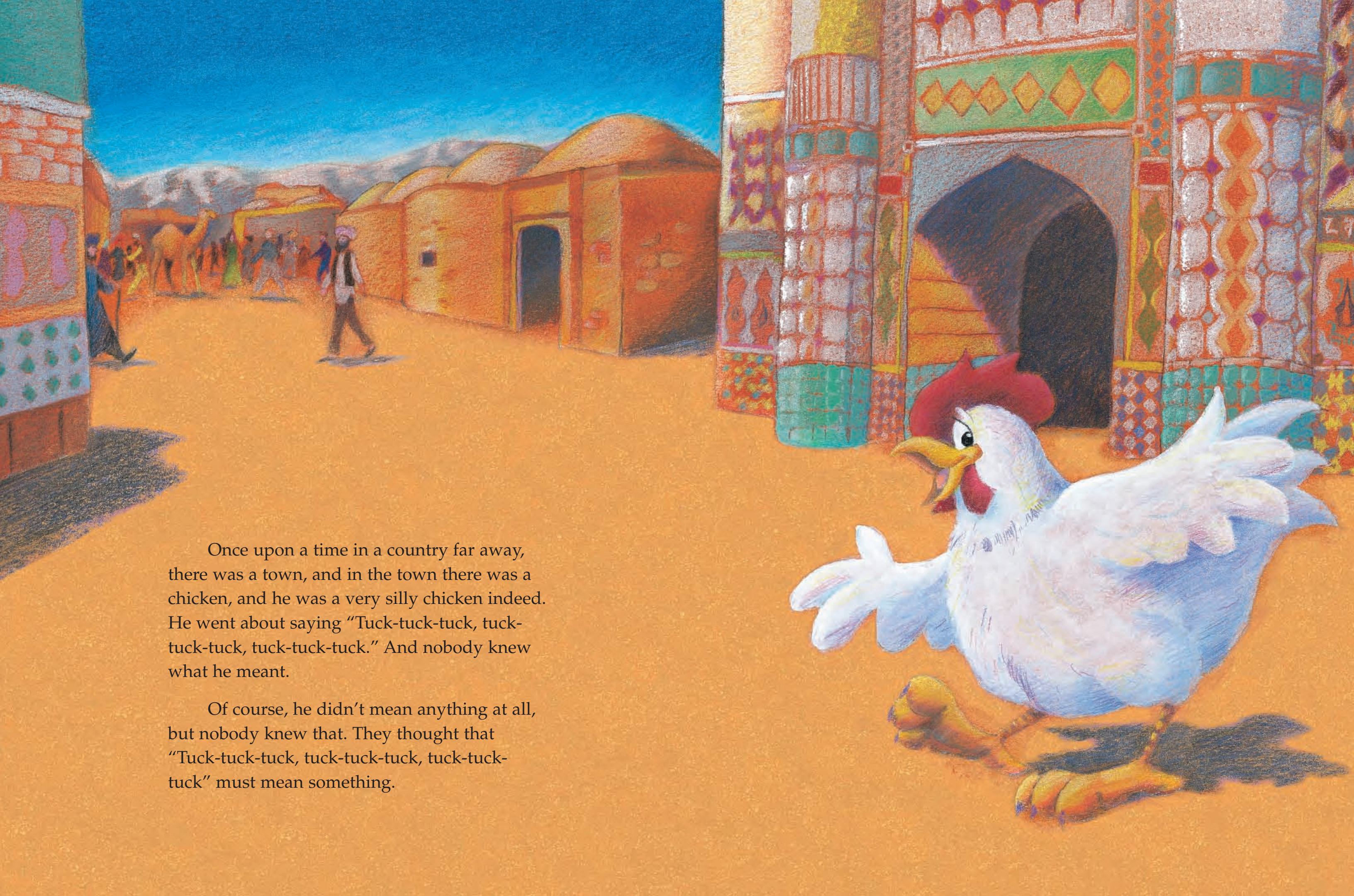
ISBN 1-883536-19-7

[1. Folklore.] I. Jackson, Jeff, 1971- ill. II. Title.

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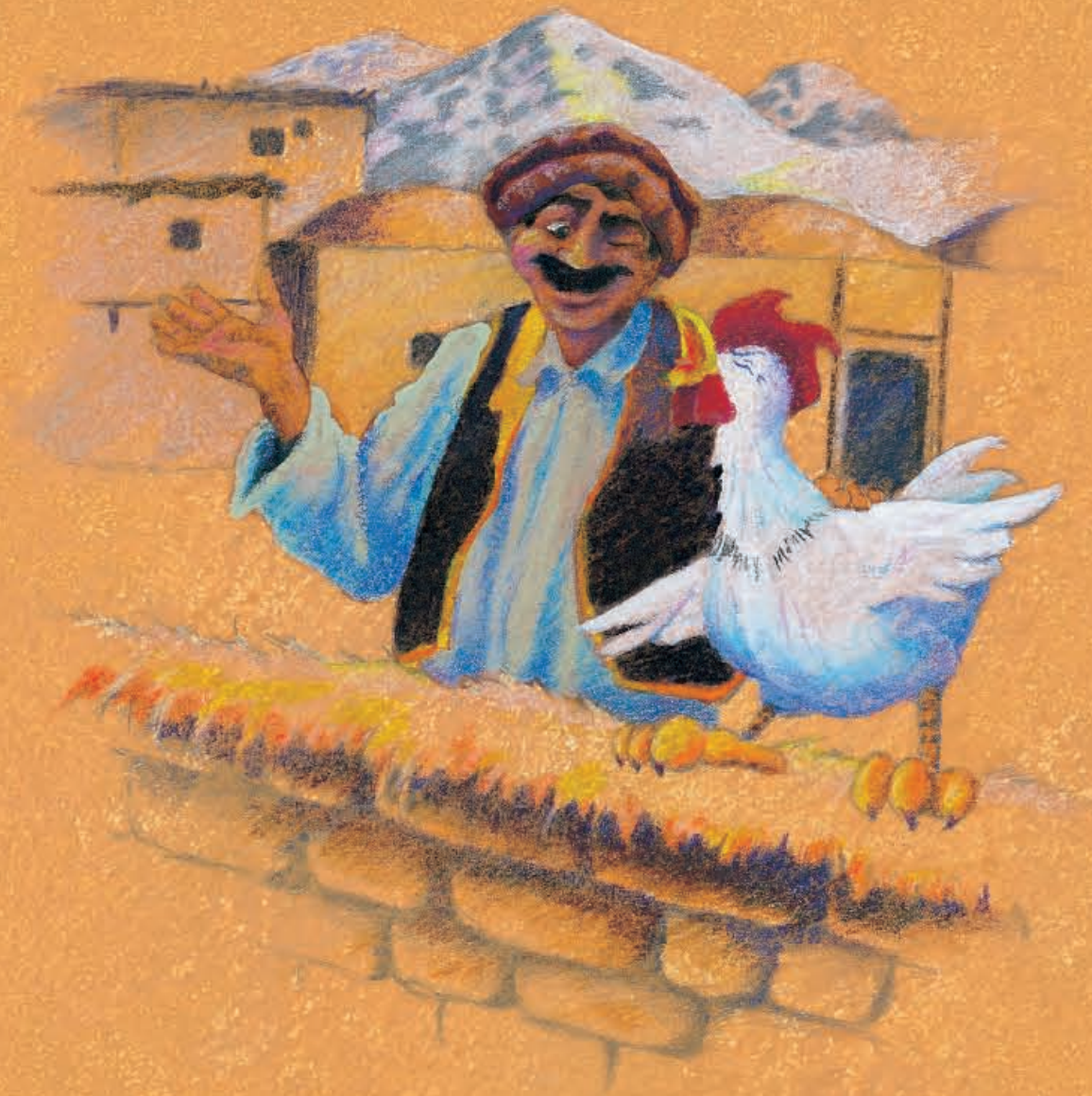
A vibrant, painterly illustration of a town square. In the foreground, a large white chicken with a red comb and wattle is walking towards the left, its wings slightly out. The ground is a warm, sandy orange. In the background, there are several buildings with domed roofs and arched doorways, some decorated with colorful patterns. A few people in traditional attire are walking in the distance. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Once upon a time in a country far away,
there was a town, and in the town there was a
chicken, and he was a very silly chicken indeed.
He went about saying “Tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-
tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.” And nobody knew
what he meant.

Of course, he didn’t mean anything at all,
but nobody knew that. They thought that
“Tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-
tuck” must mean something.

Now, a very clever man came to the town, and he decided to see if he could find out what the chicken meant by “Tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.”

First he tried to learn the chicken’s language. He tried, and he tried, and he tried. But all he learned to say was “Tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.” Unfortunately, although he sounded just like the chicken, he had no idea what he was saying.



Then he decided to teach the chicken to speak our kind of language. He tried, and he tried, and he tried. It took him quite a long time, but in the end, the chicken could speak perfectly well, just like you and me.



After learning to speak as we do, the chicken went into the main street of the town and called out, "The earth is going to swallow us up!" At first the people didn't hear what he was saying because they didn't expect a chicken to be talking human language.

The chicken called out again, "The earth is going to swallow us up!" This time the people heard him, and they began to cry out,

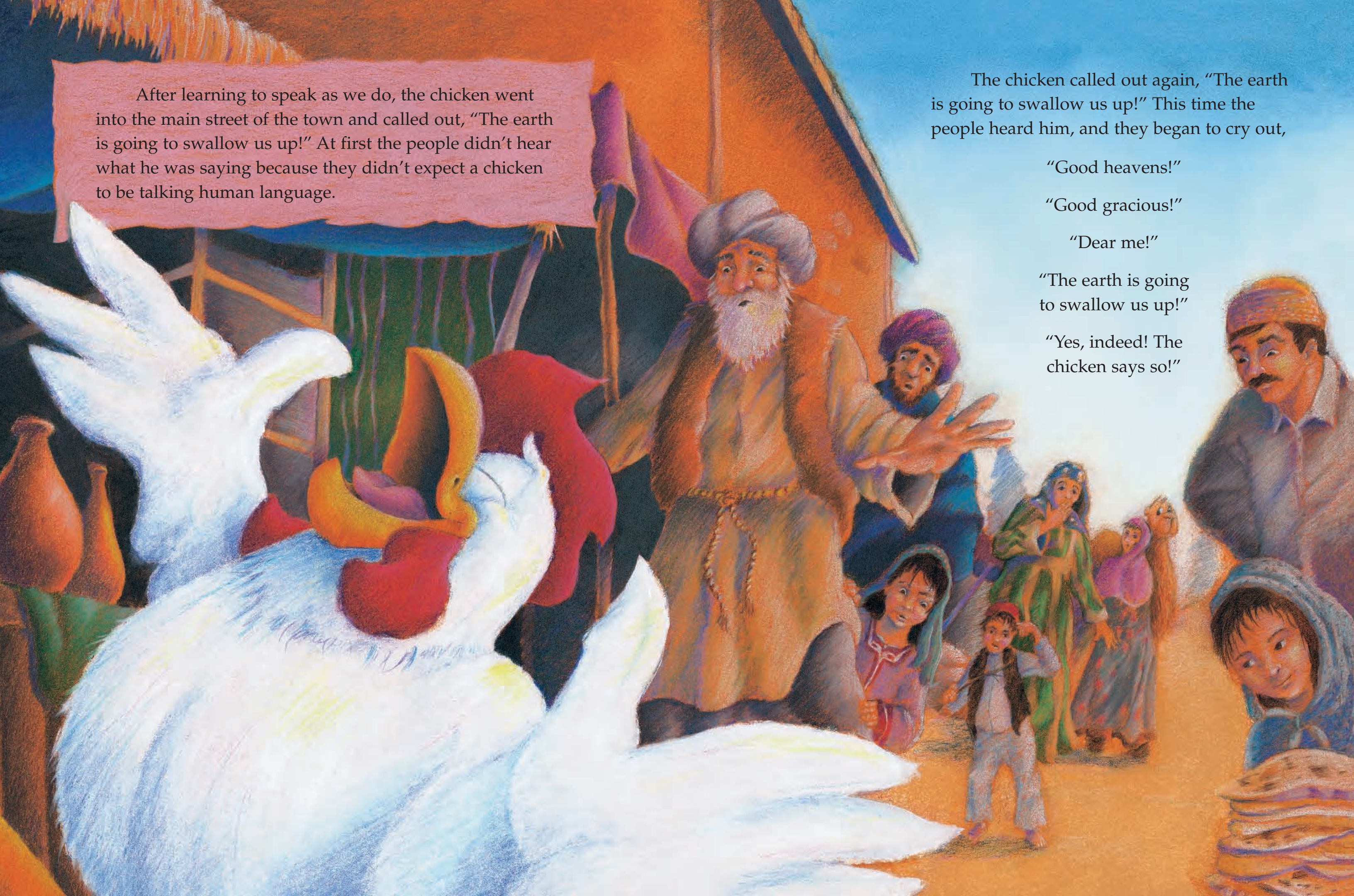
"Good heavens!"

"Good gracious!"

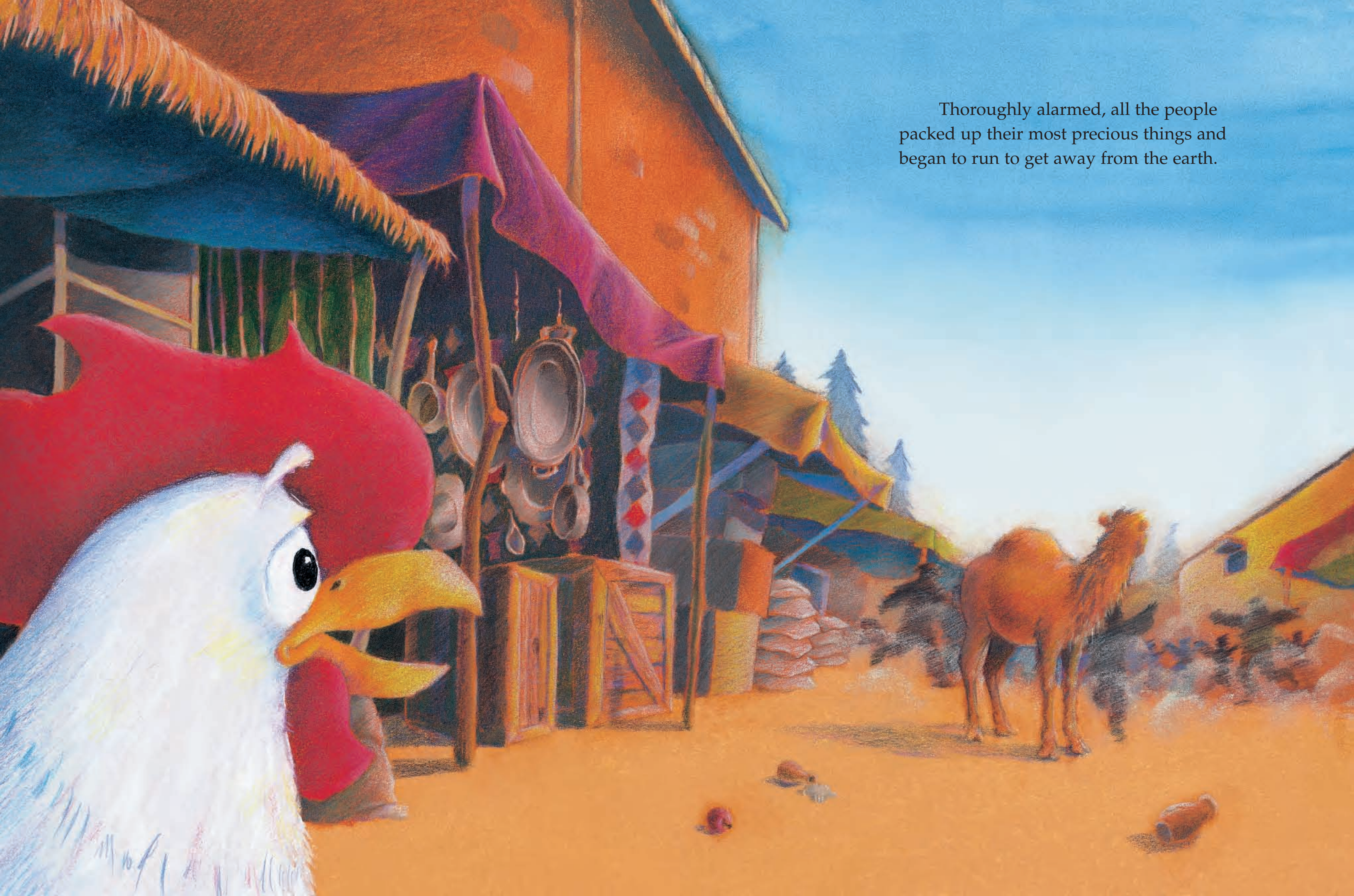
"Dear me!"

"The earth is going to swallow us up!"

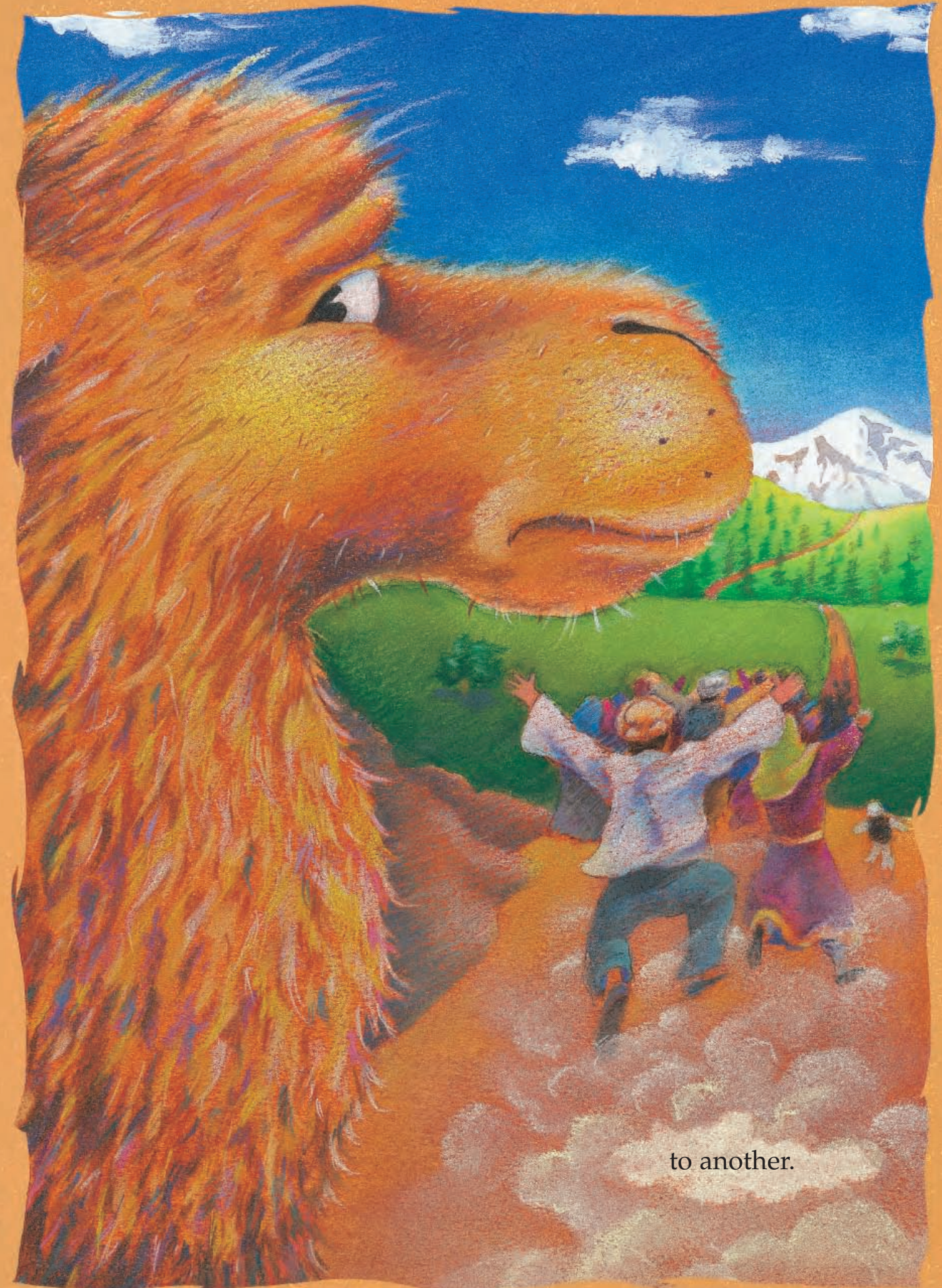
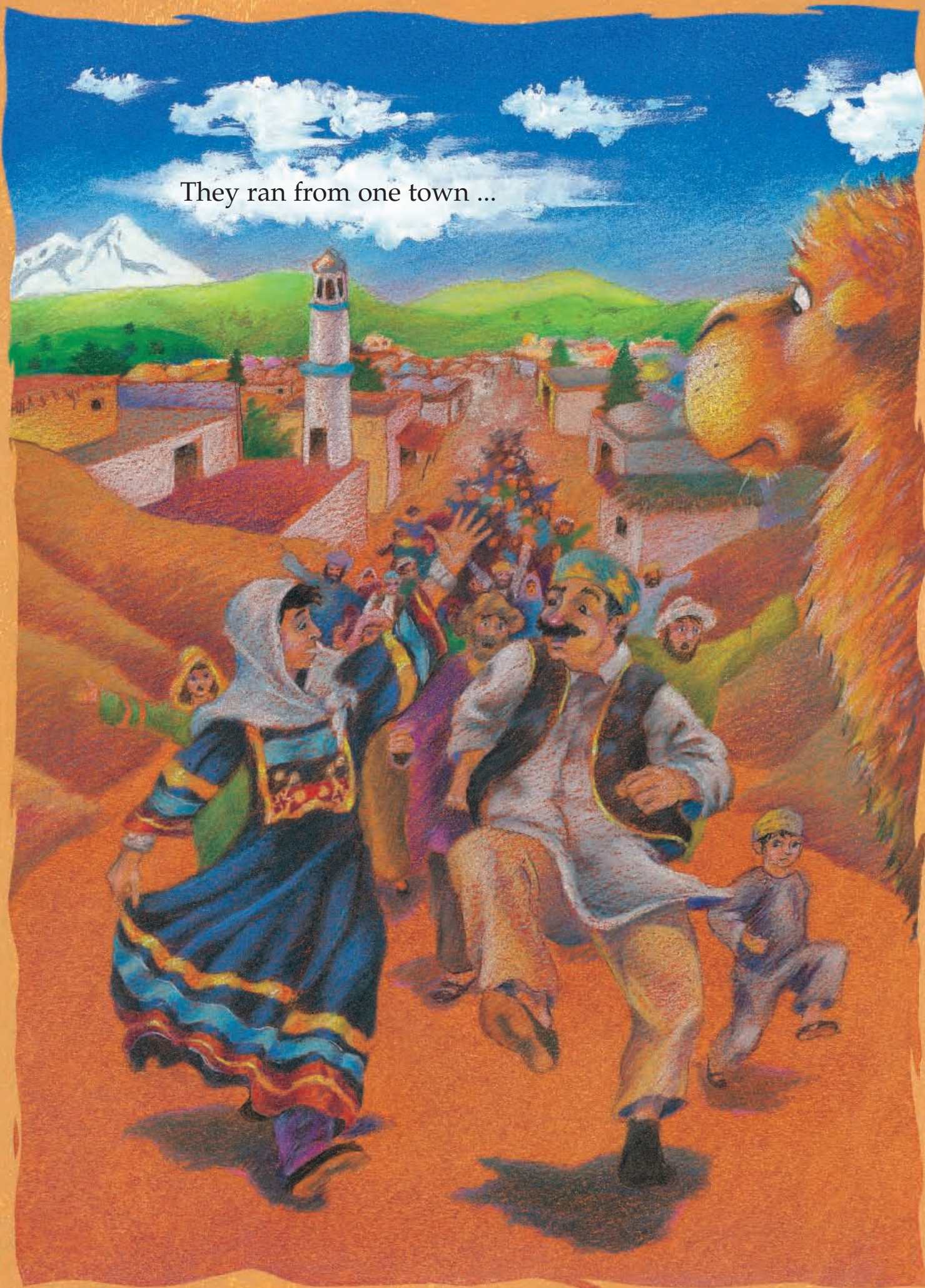
"Yes, indeed! The chicken says so!"



Thoroughly alarmed, all the people
packed up their most precious things and
began to run to get away from the earth.



They ran from one town ...



to another.

They ran through the fields ...

and into the woods and across the meadows.



They ran up the mountains ...



and down the mountains.

[illegible]

They ran down the world and up the world ...

and around the world.



They ran in every possible direction. But they still couldn't get away from the earth.

Finally they came back to their town. And there was the chicken, just where they had left him before they started running.

“How do you know the earth is going to swallow us up?” they asked the chicken.

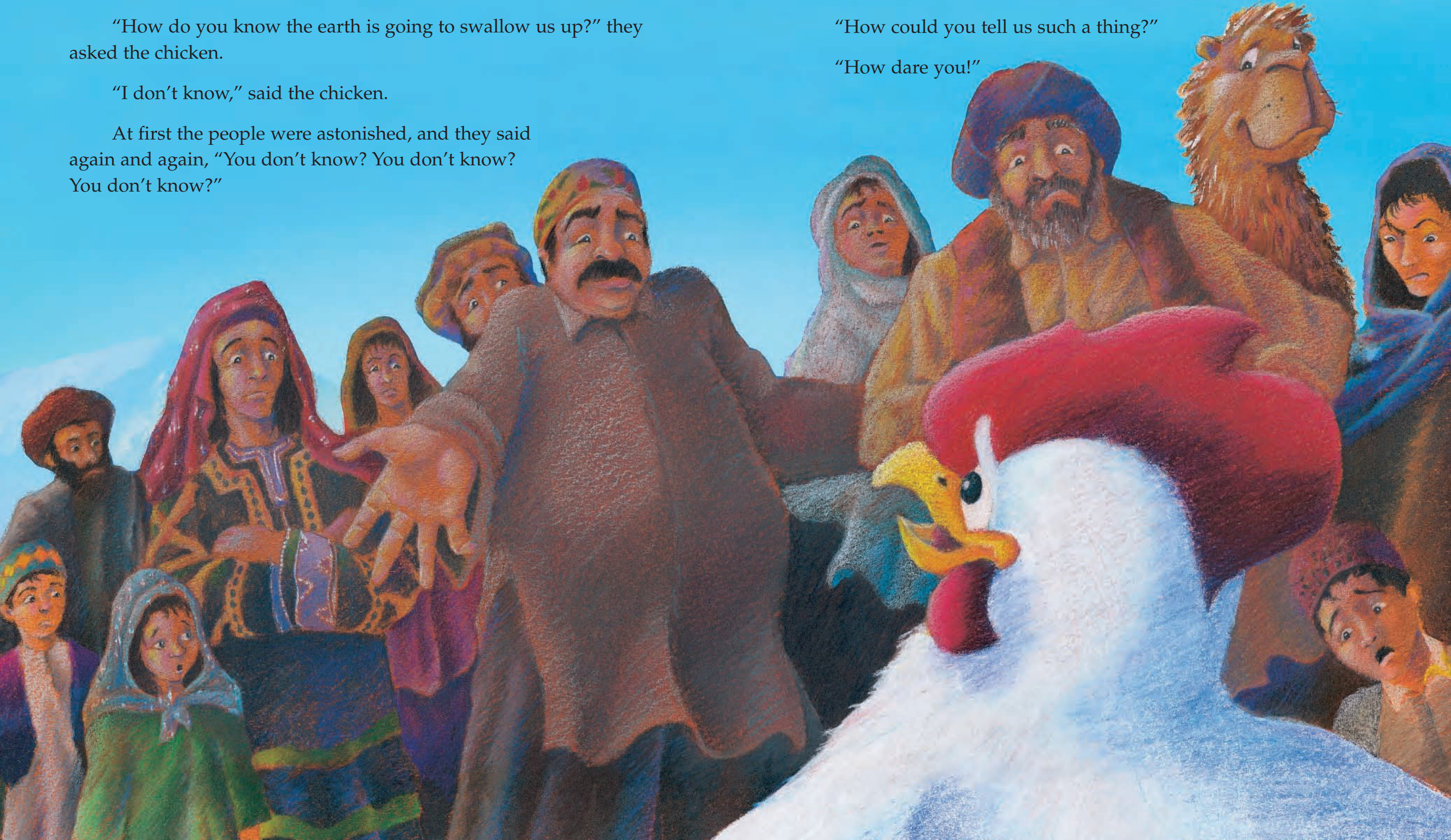
“I don’t know,” said the chicken.

At first the people were astonished, and they said again and again, “You don’t know? You don’t know? You don’t know?”

And they became furious, and they glared sternly at the chicken and spoke in angry voices.

“How could you tell us such a thing?”

“How dare you!”



"You made us run from one town to another!"



"You made us run through the fields and into the woods and across the meadows!"

"You made us run up the mountains ..."



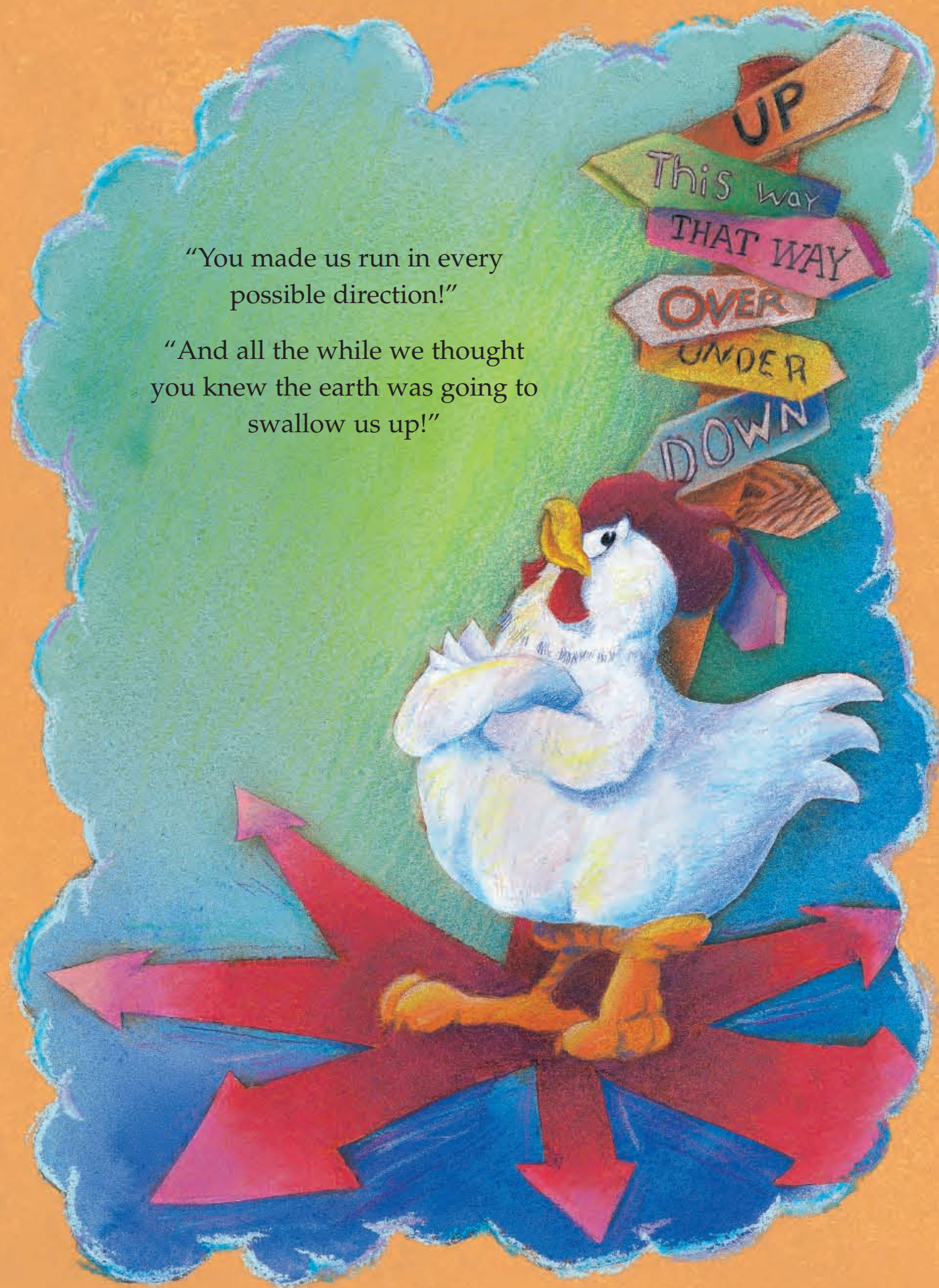
and down the mountains!"

"You made us run
down the world and
up the world and
around the world!"



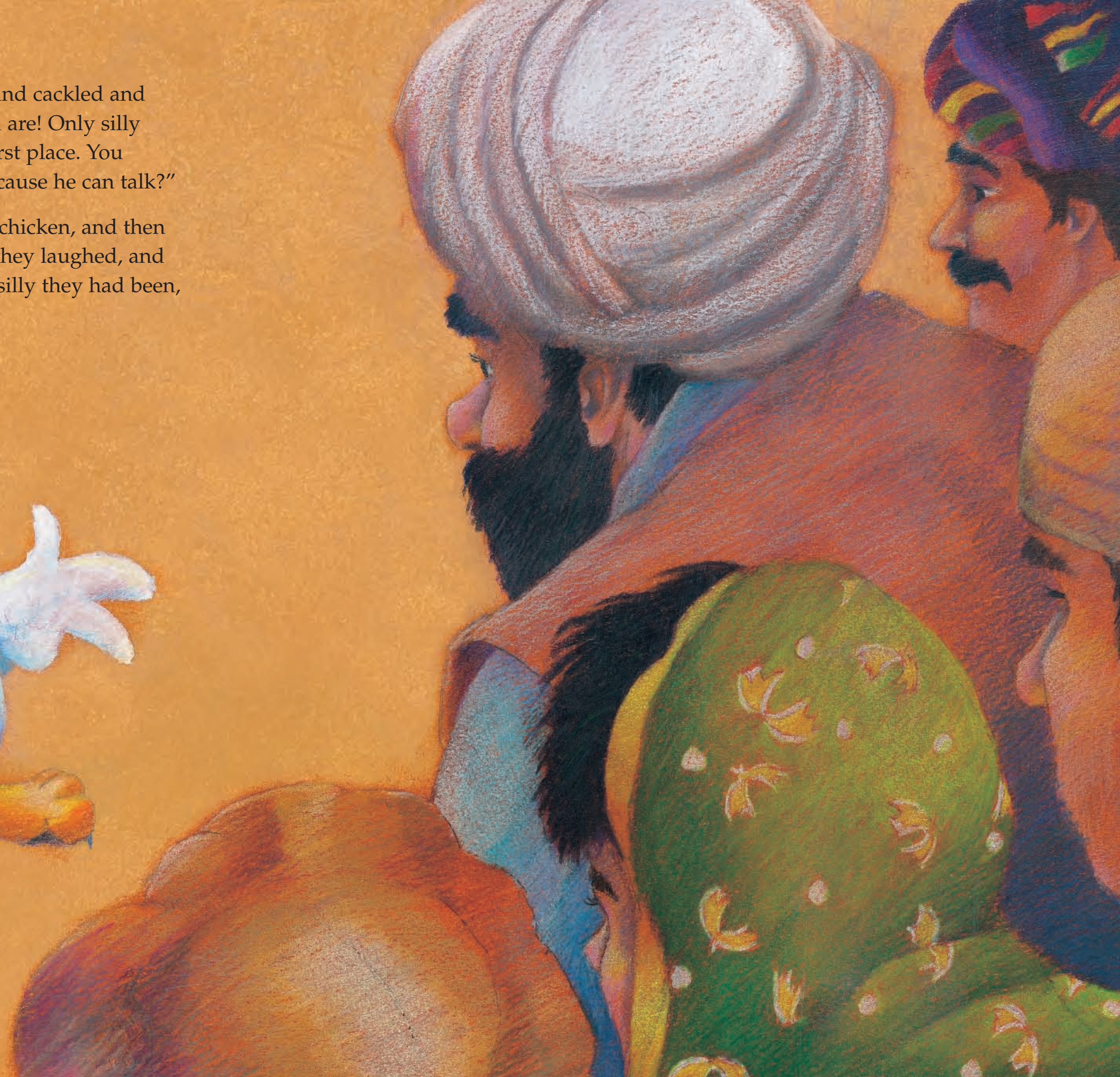
"You made us run in every
possible direction!"


"And all the while we thought
you knew the earth was going to
swallow us up!"



The chicken smoothed his feathers and cackled and said, "Well, that just shows how silly you are! Only silly people would listen to a chicken in the first place. You think a chicken knows something just because he can talk?"

At first the people just stared at the chicken, and then they began to laugh. They laughed, and they laughed, and they laughed because they realized how silly they had been, and they found that very funny indeed.





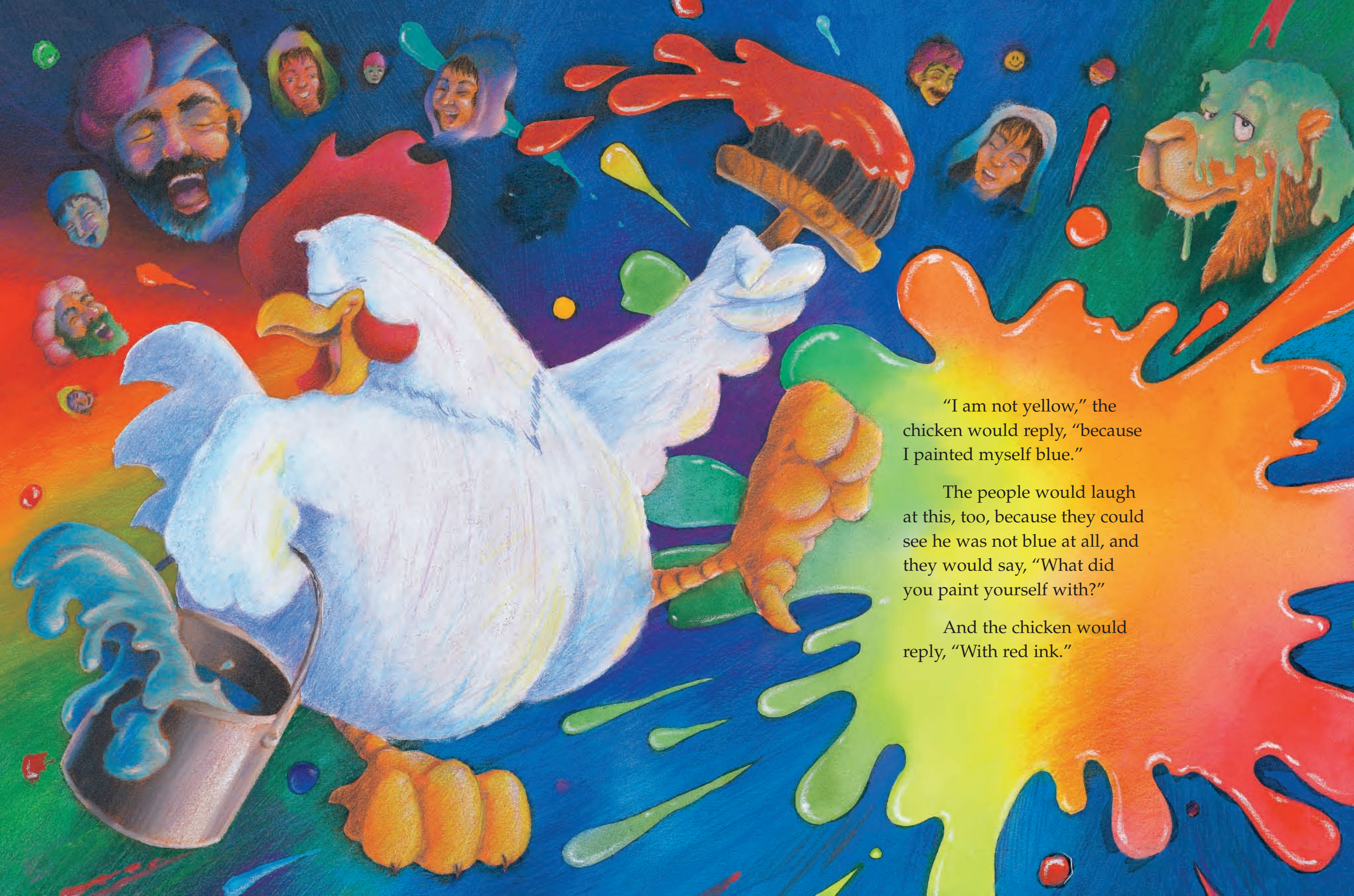
After that, whenever they wanted
to laugh they would go to the
chicken and say, "Tell us
something to make us laugh."

And the chicken would say,
"Cups and saucers are made out
of knives and forks!"

The people would laugh and say,
"Who are you? Who are you?"

And the chicken would reply, "I am an egg."

The people would laugh at this, too, because
they knew he wasn't an egg, and they would say,
"If you're an egg, why aren't you yellow?"



"I am not yellow," the chicken would reply, "because I painted myself blue."

The people would laugh at this, too, because they could see he was not blue at all, and they would say, "What did you paint yourself with?"

And the chicken would reply, "With red ink."



And now people everywhere laugh at chickens and never take any notice of what they say — even if they can talk — because, of course, everybody knows that chickens are silly.

And that chicken still goes on and on in that town, in that far-away country, telling people things to make them laugh.

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The Tale of the Sands

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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



Dedicated to the sense of imagination which lives within us all.



A stream, from its source in far-off mountains ...

... passing through every kind
and description of countryside ...

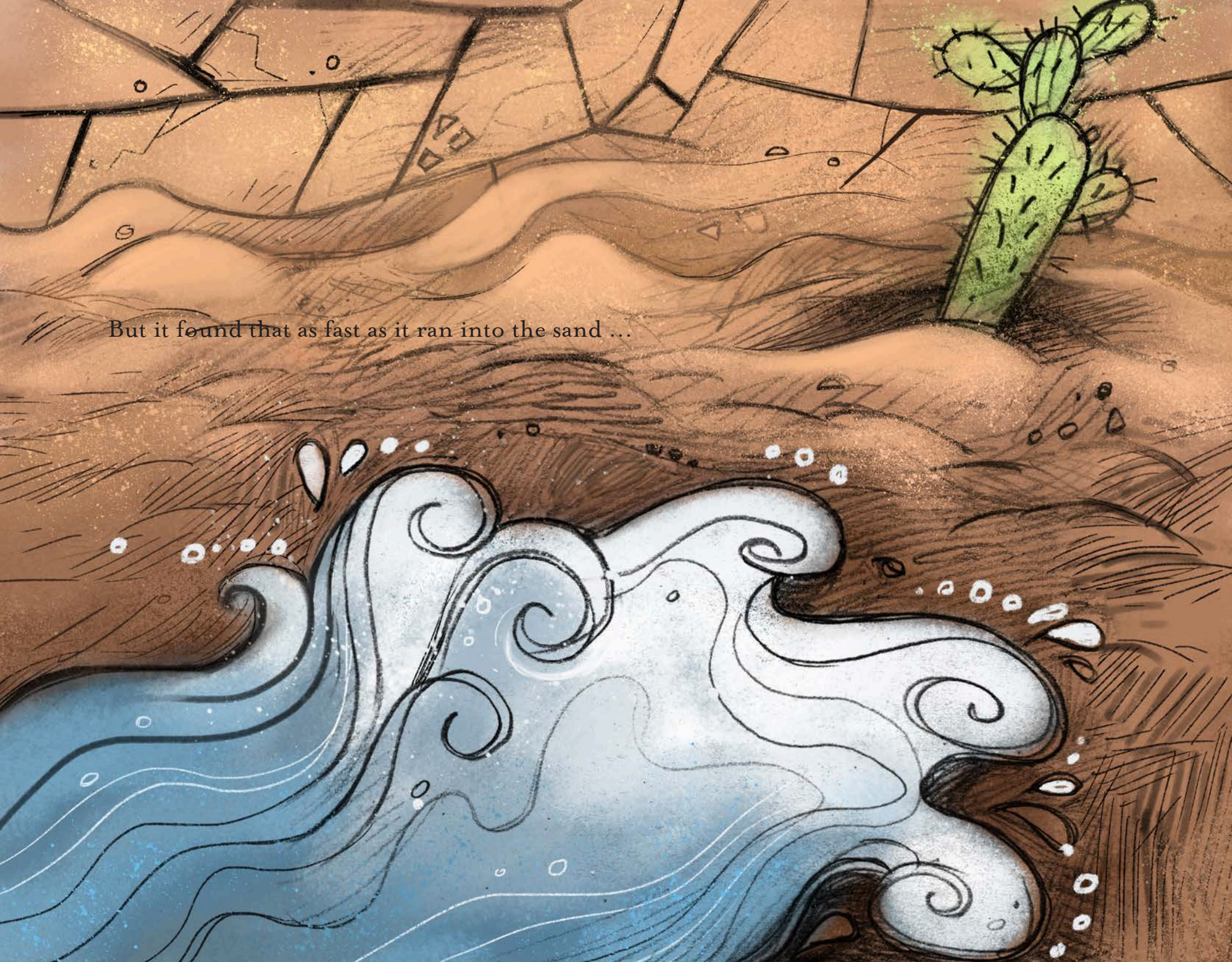


... at last reached the sands of the desert.

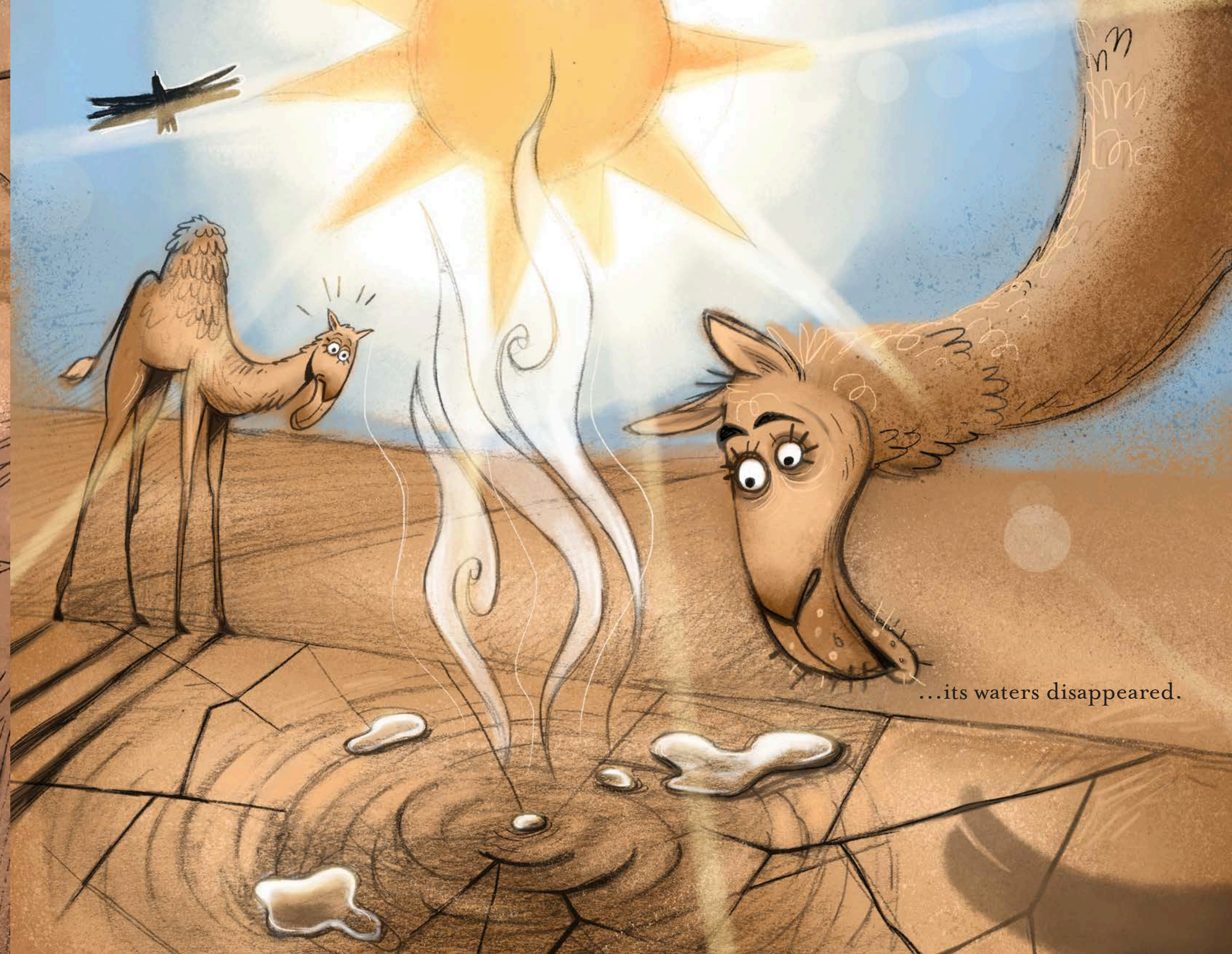





Just as it had crossed every other barrier,
The stream tried to cross this one.



But it found that as fast as it ran into the sand ...

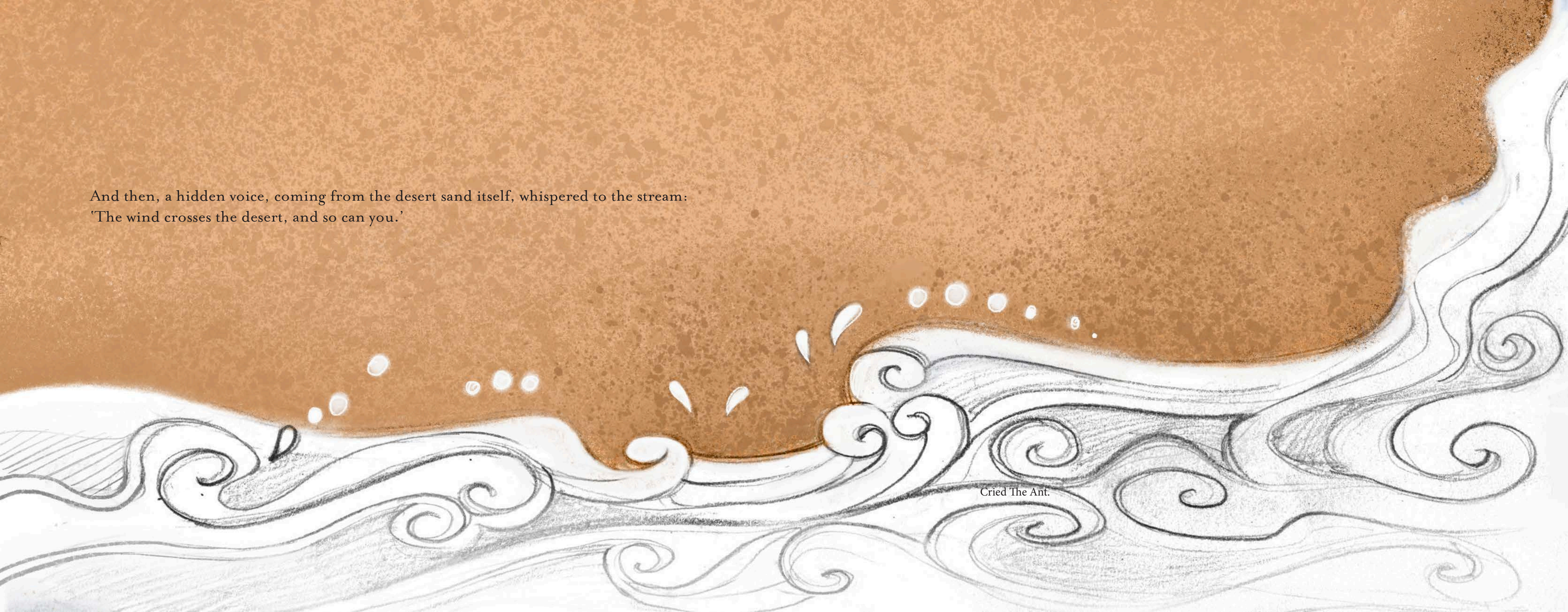


...its waters disappeared.



The stream was certain that its destiny was to cross this desert.

And yet *there was* no way to get across.



And then, a hidden voice, coming from the desert sand itself, whispered to the stream:
'The wind crosses the desert, and so can you.'

Cried The Ant.

The stream grumbled that it was racing towards the sand with all its might, but that it was only getting absorbed.

It pointed out that the wind could fly, and this was why it could cross a desert.






'By hurtling at things in your usual energetic way you will not get across,' cooed the voice of the sands.

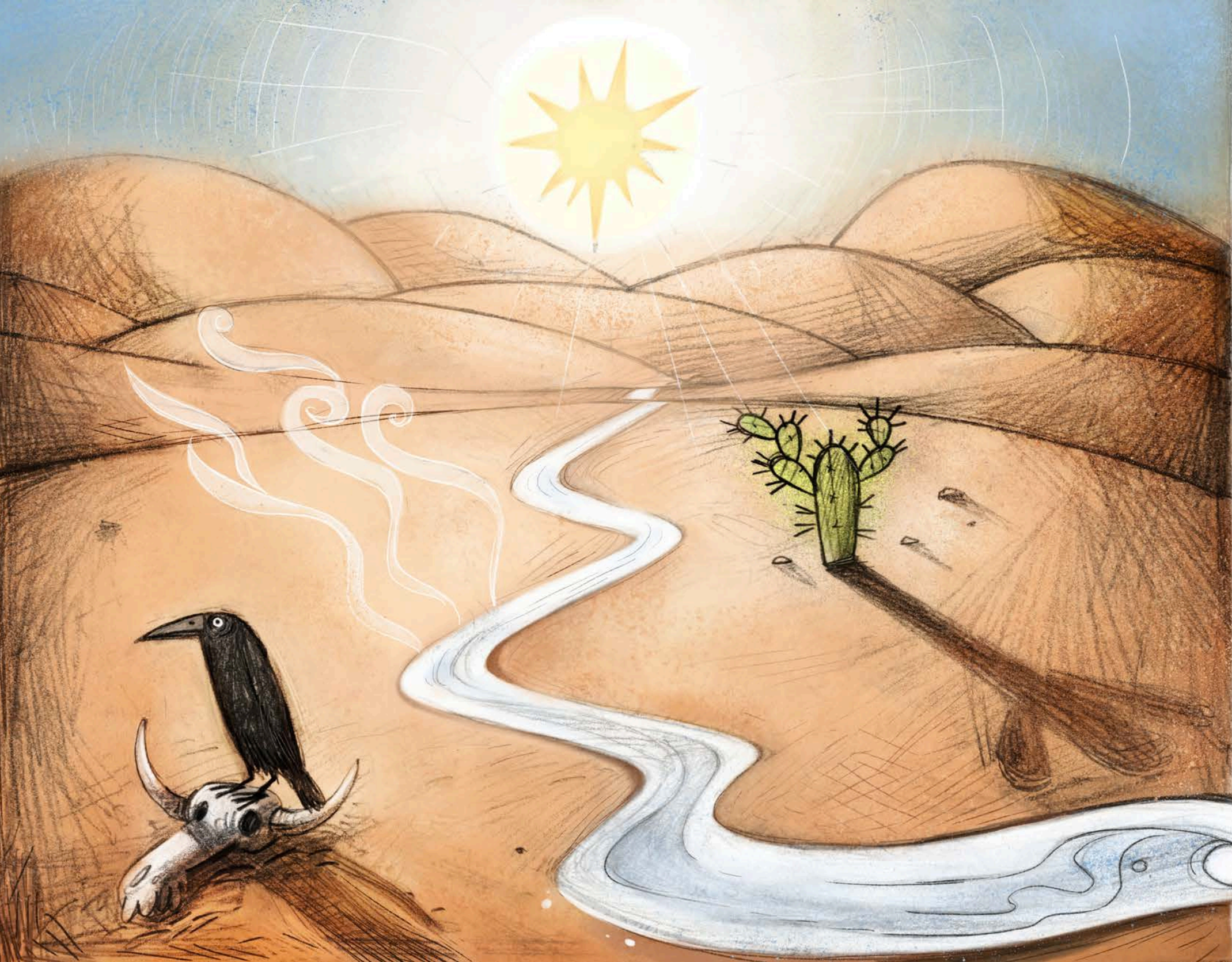
'You will either disappear.

Or become a marsh.



You must allow the wind to carry you over to your destination.'

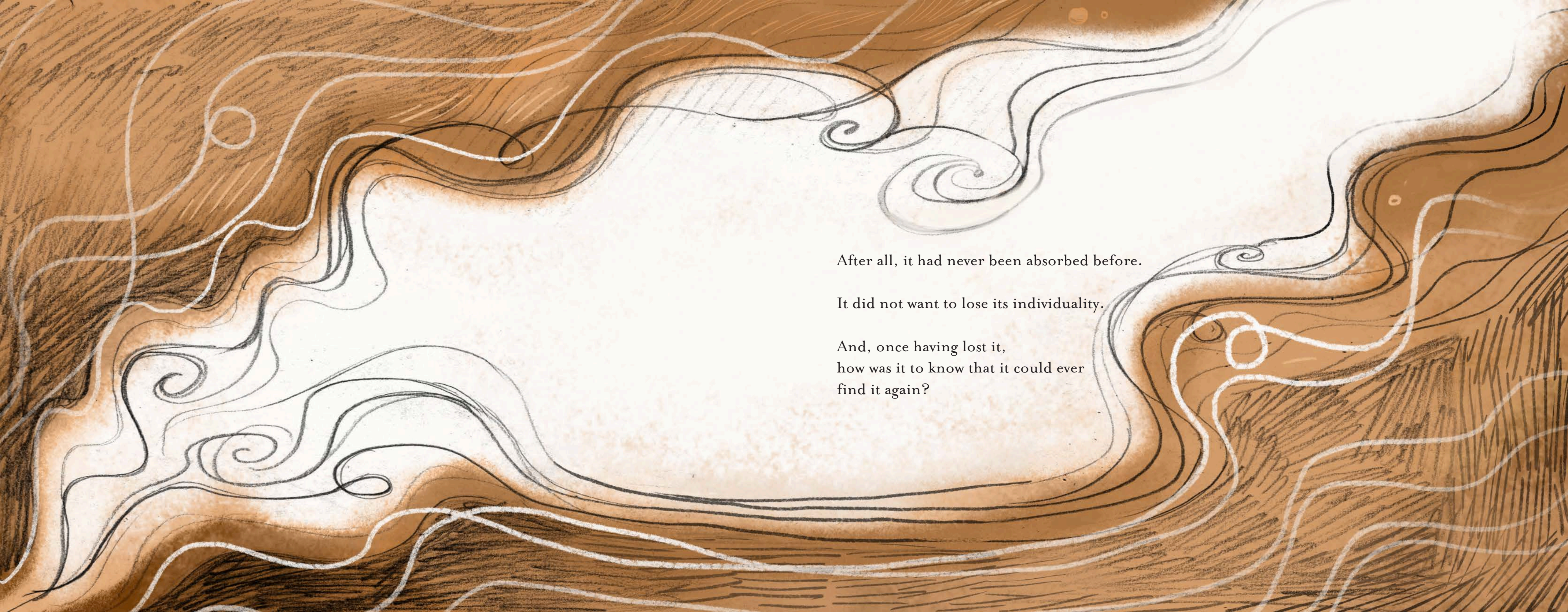
'But how can the wind carry me?' sobbed the frustrated stream.



'You can be carried but only by allowing yourself to be absorbed into the wind.'
The sands whispered.

The stream did not like the idea of being swallowed up by the wind at all.



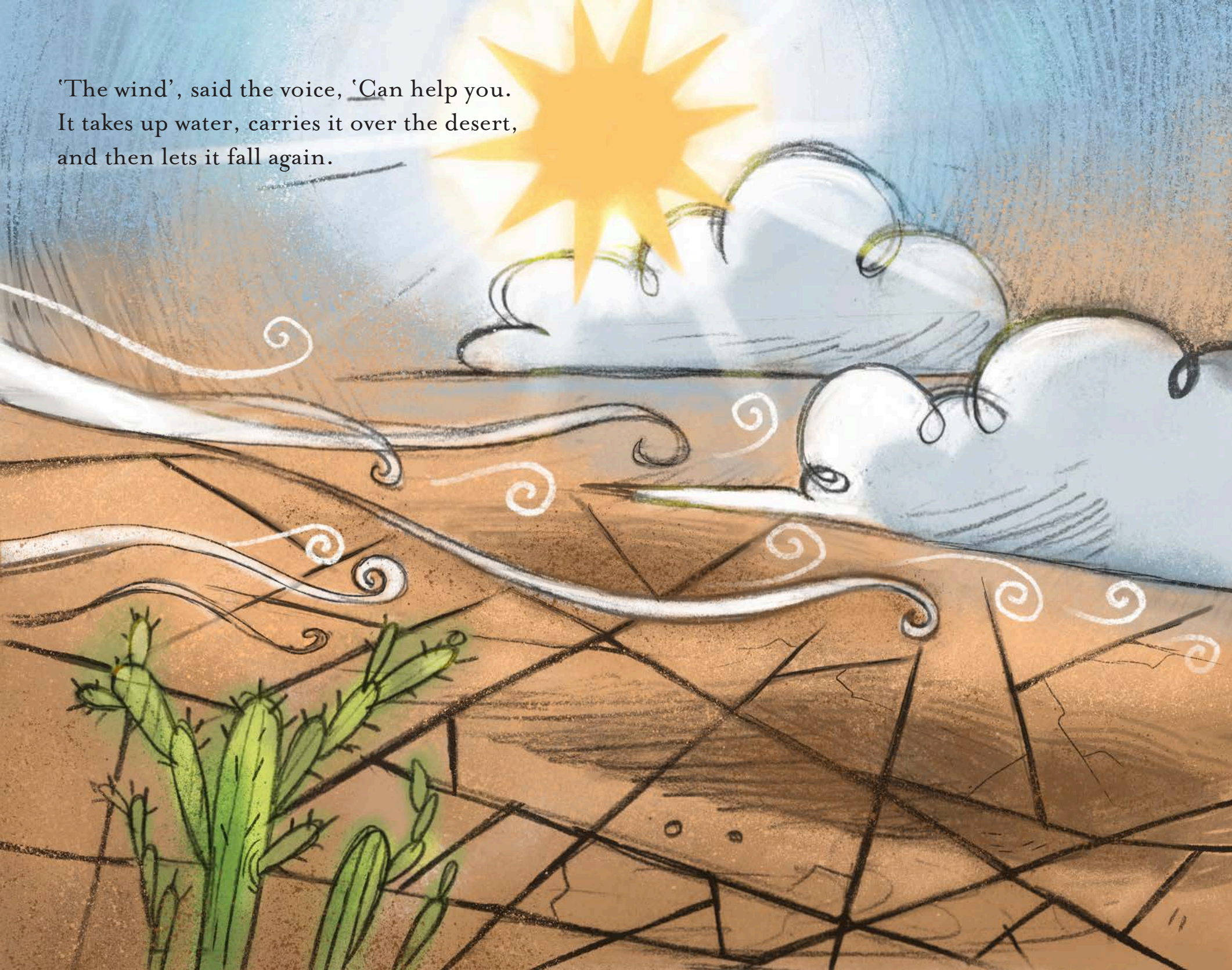


After all, it had never been absorbed before.

It did not want to lose its individuality.

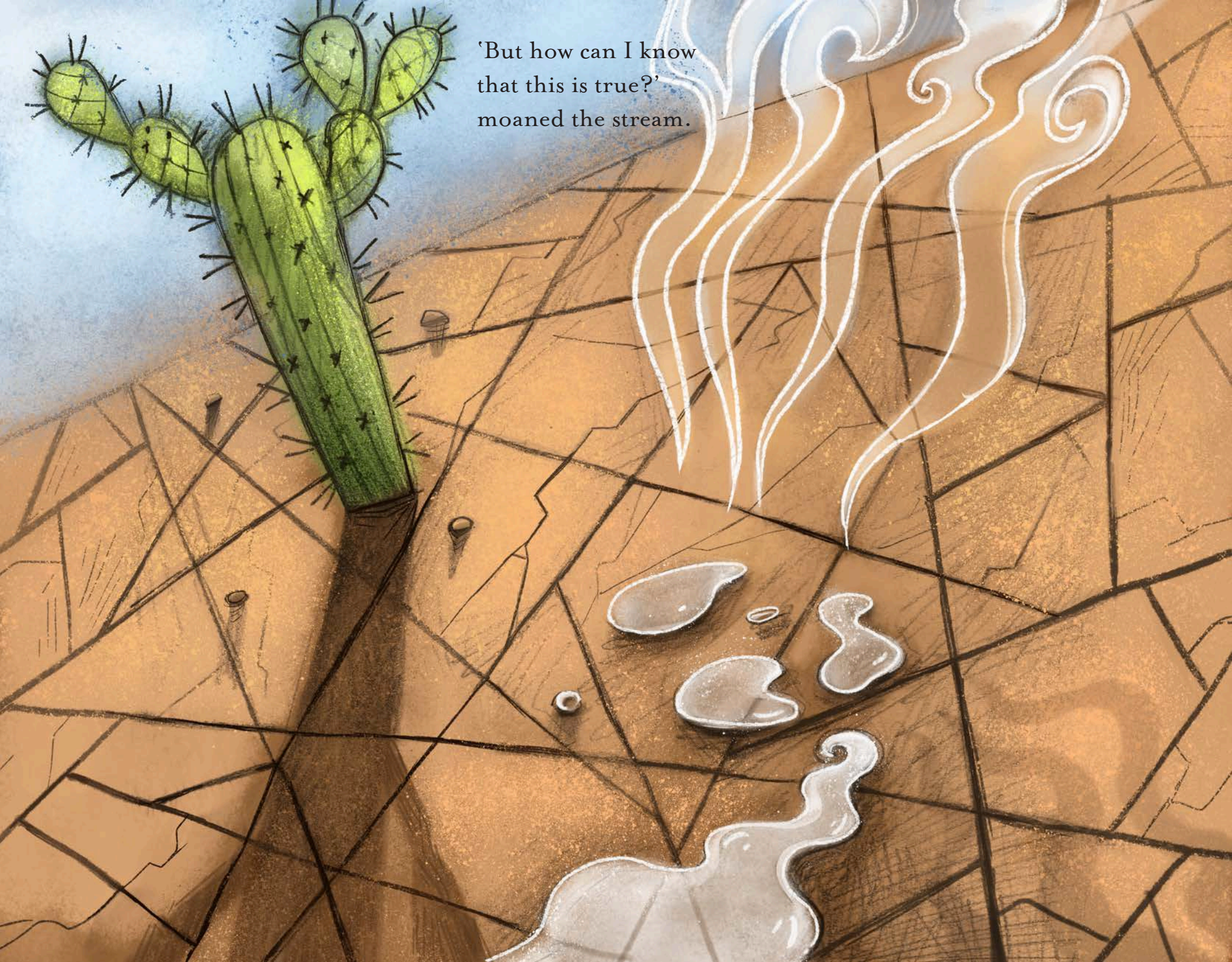
And, once having lost it,
how was it to know that it could ever
find it again?

'The wind', said the voice, 'Can help you.
It takes up water, carries it over the desert,
and then lets it fall again.'

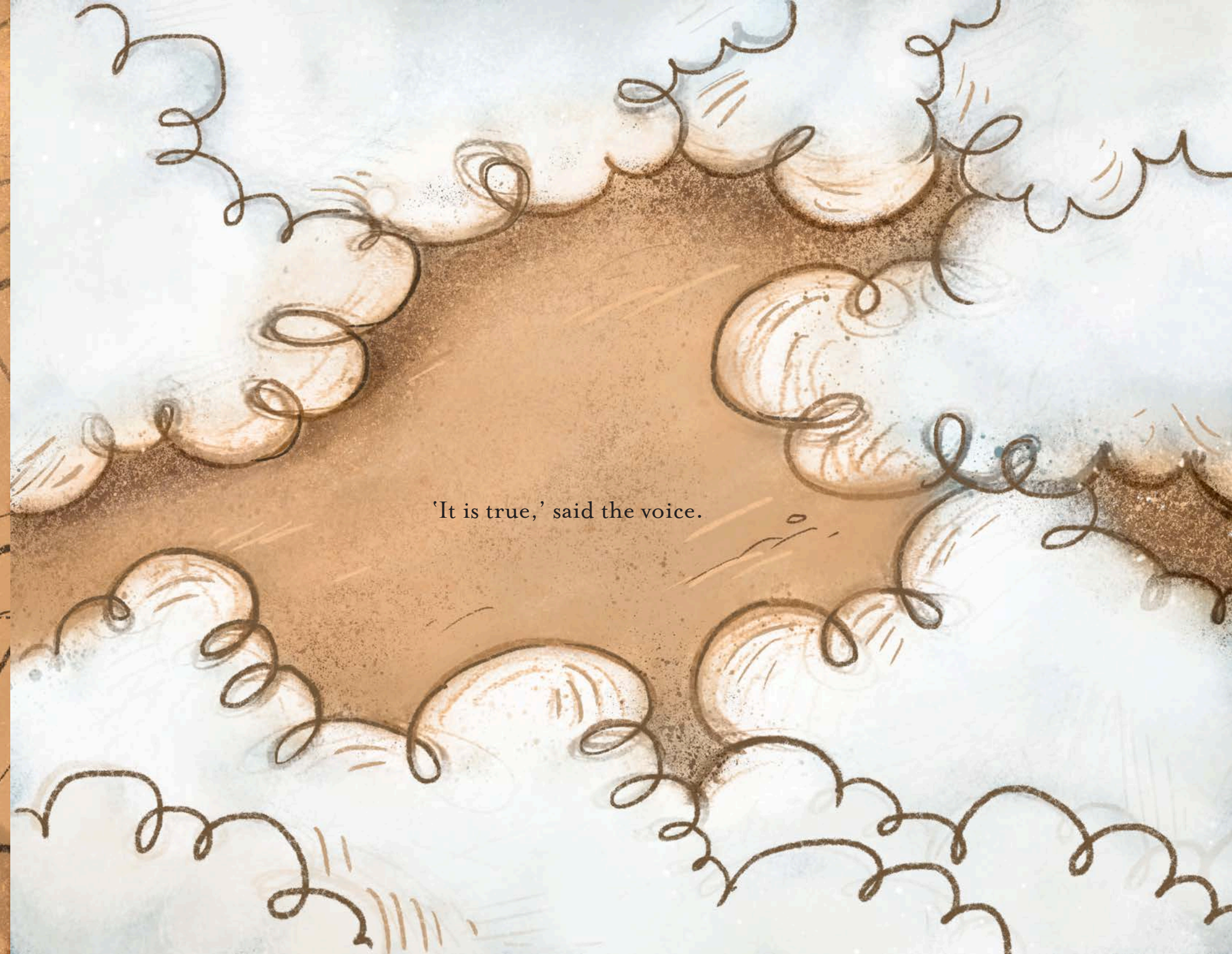


Falling as rain, the water again becomes a river.'





'But how can I know
that this is true?'
moaned the stream.



'It is true,' said the voice.



'And anyway, if you don't listen to me,
the best you can hope to become is a quagmire ...

and even that could take you many, many years ...


And being a quagmire isn't nearly as good as being a stream.'



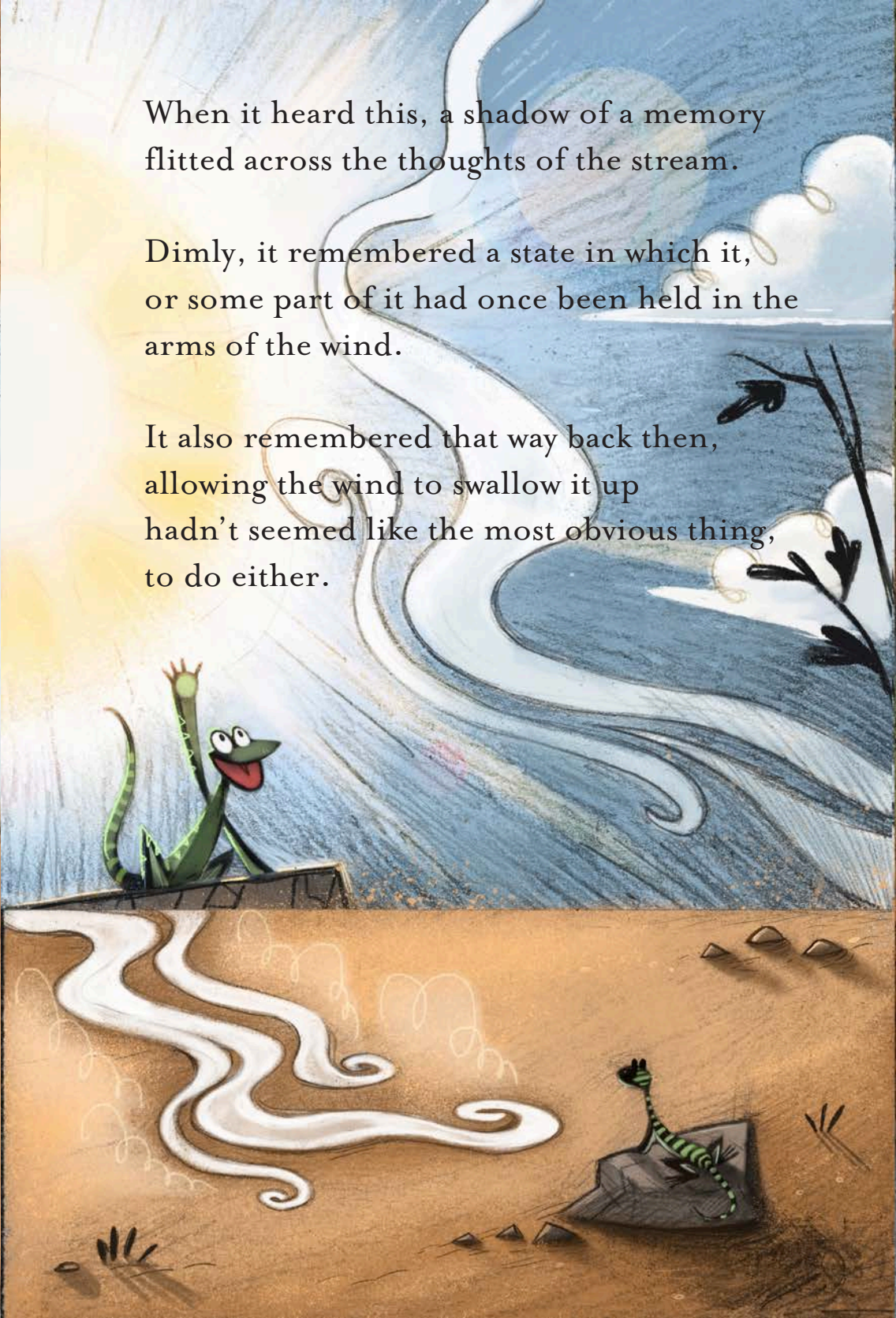


'But I just want to stay the same as I am!' wailed the stream.

'Whatever happens, you can't stay *exactly* the same as you are now,' the voice said.



'But if you act now, the wind
will carry your most important
part away, so that it can re-form you
into a wonderful *new* stream.'



When it heard this, a shadow of a memory
flitted across the thoughts of the stream.

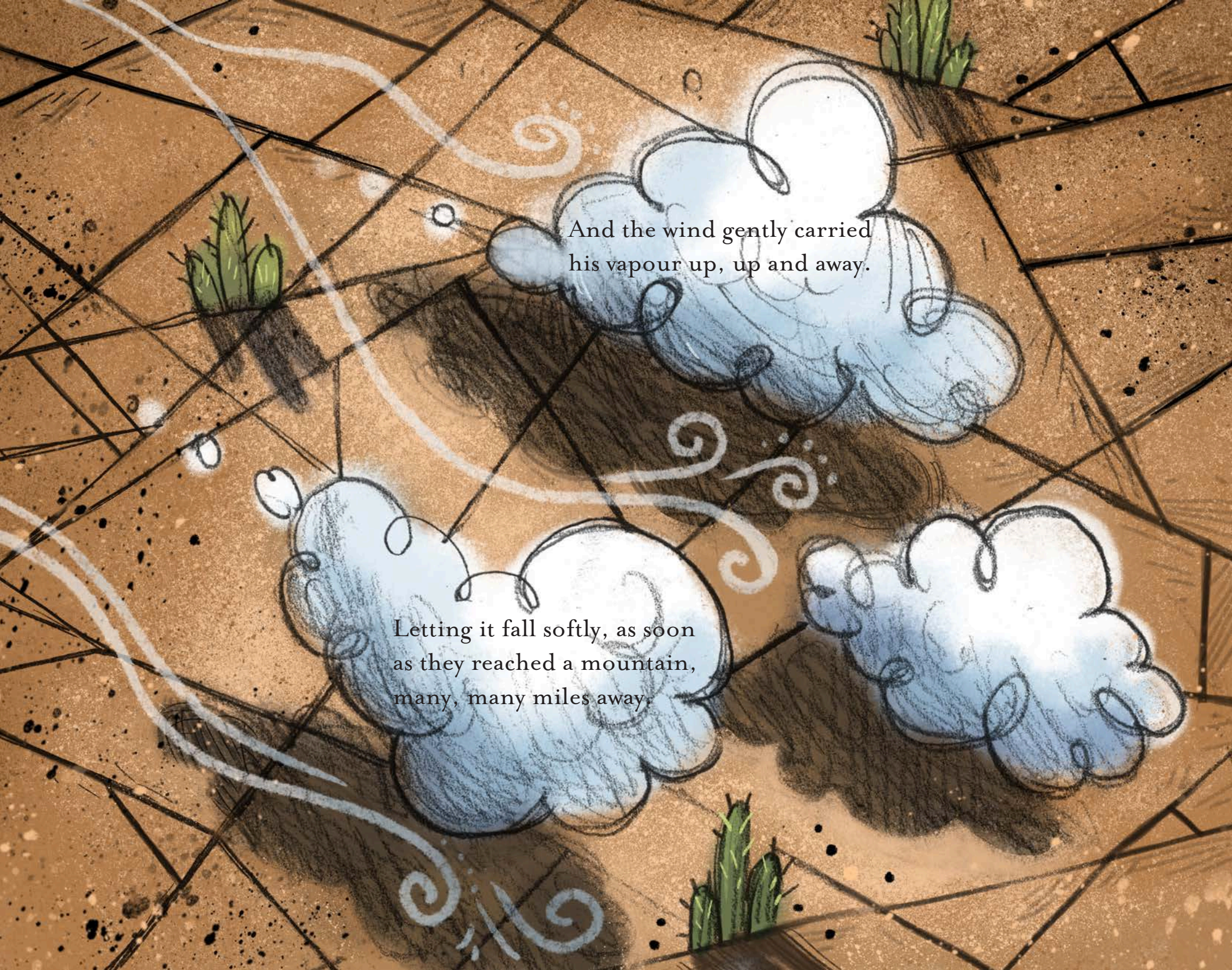
Dimly, it remembered a state in which it,
or some part of it had once been held in the
arms of the wind.

It also remembered that way back then,
allowing the wind to swallow it up
hadn't seemed like the most obvious thing,
to do either.





So with a whimper of fear, the stream raised his vapour into the welcoming arms of the wind.



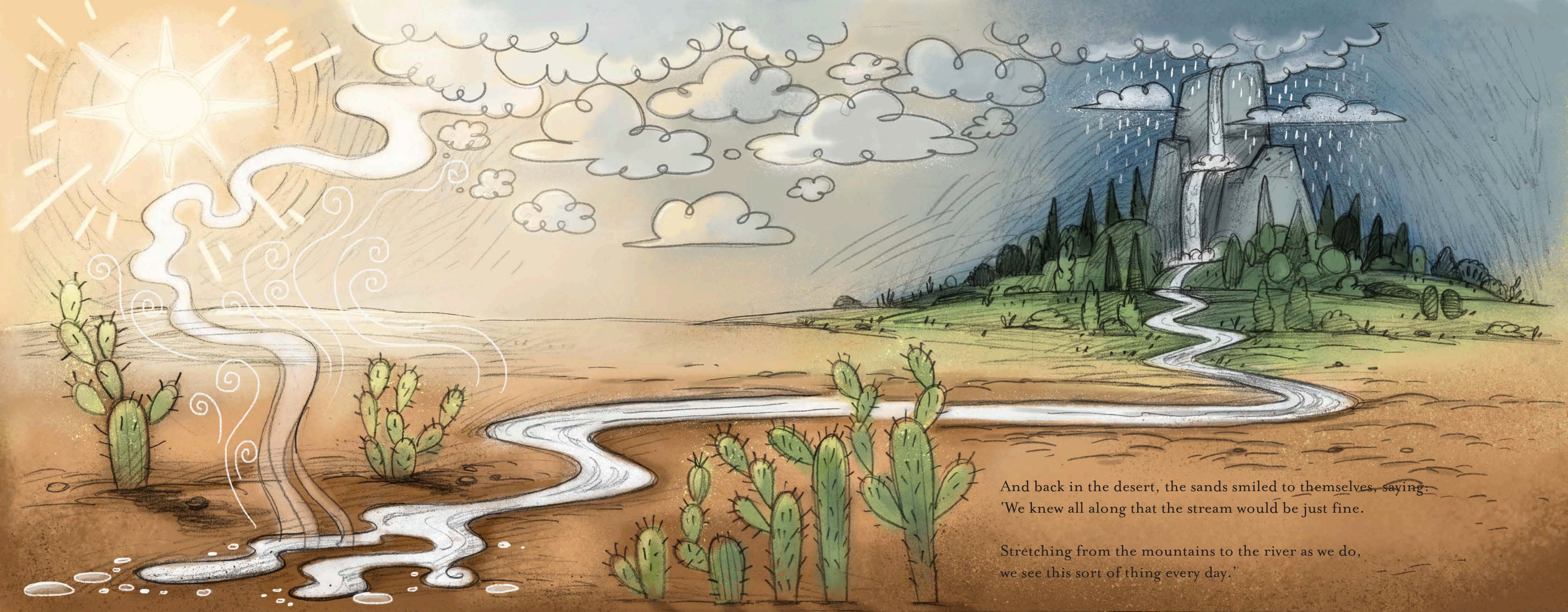
And the wind gently carried
his vapour up, up and away.

Letting it fall softly, as soon
as they reached a mountain,
many, many miles away.



And because it had been so worried
about what would happen,
the stream was able to really appreciate
its new home.

And with a sigh of relief it realised
that it now knew what it really meant
to be a stream.



And back in the desert, the sands smiled to themselves, saying:
'We knew all along that the stream would be just fine.'

Stretching from the mountains to the river as we do,
we see this sort of thing every day.'

And that is why it is said that the 'Stream of Life' is written in the sands.

